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PAGES IN THE LIFE OF A SUFI

Reflections and Reminiscences of
MUSHARAFF MOULAMIA KHAN

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PATERNOSTER HOUSE, E.C.

TO
MY WIFE

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INTRODUCTION

OUR interest in India seems just now to increase almost hourly. And, as it increases, there grows with it our need for a better understanding of the real heart of India's people, for upon this better understanding the future of our relationship depends.

Many books are written about the East. Some are deliberately sensational, others are descriptive, others deal with social conditions, and there are the volumes which set forth interpretations of Oriental philosophy and religion. But there is something which is rarely conveyed—the natural inspiration arising from Indian family and social life when lived in response to a high spiritual ideal and as it affects the innocence of childhood and the sensitive mind of youth. It is this which makes the pages of Musharaff Moulamia Khan so valuable to anyone sympathetically interested in the Indian point of view.

Princes, fakirs, mystics, musicians move across the scene; we catch glimpses of brilliant pageants and picturesque ceremonial. But the most lasting impression, and at the same time the most affecting, is of something intangible which may be likened to a fragrance, the perfume, perhaps, which a Sufi

mystic has spoken of as arising "from association with the rose". It is, possibly, too subtle for all to detect : upon those who can detect it, it bestows an insight into an aspect of Indian life which many pages of intellectual analysis could not so adequately provide.

E. A. M.

PREFACE

THE object of Sufism to-day is to promote understanding between different civilizations and between East and West. These few pages have been written with the assistance of Miss Margaret Skinner. May they help to bring forth the beauty that is hidden in the heart of mankind, and to produce that inner and outer peace every soul is longing for.

(Signed) MUSHARAFF MOULAMIA KHAN.

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PAGES IN THE LIFE OF A SUFI

CHAPTER I

MY father, Rahamet Khan, was a musician and learned his art at the feet of a great master or murshid, who was chiefly renowned for his knowledge of that branch of the ancient sacred music which we call durpad. Durpad is music of the school that existed in India before the coming of the Mogul empire. This music was never written down, though it has been taught by master to pupil for generations and handed on in this way. For in India our music is learned in the presence of the murshid; by listening to him and imitating him. We say it is taught by soul to soul.

The murshid from whom my father learned was a fakir, that is to say, he lived upon the offerings that were given to him. Sometimes the King of that country would visit this murshid, bringing him rich presents of money and gold. These the murshid would distribute at once among his pupils, telling them that it must all be spent in that same day. Sometimes, if the present was a large one, the murshid would distribute it among the inhabitants of the villages near at hand. This he did to preserve his independence, and to show that he served only his art. For it is independence which

makes the artist and preserves art. So my father learned from his murshid and taught us, his sons, again. For we his three sons all became musicians in our turn.

My father belonged to the Mashaiakh family of the Punjab. Jumasha the saint of the Punjab was his ancestor, Jumasha to whose shrine even now a yearly pilgrimage is made. For people of India have come from all parts—Jew and Christian, Muslim and Hindu alike—to do homage and reverence at the tomb of Jumasha.

My father had been left an orphan at an early age, when his father, Bahadur Khan, died, and he then came under the care of his eldest brother, Zafar Khan, who was fourteen or fifteen years older than this young brother. A story told of my father at this time when he was under the care of his brother, Zafar Khan, may serve, perhaps, to show something of the Indian point of view, and of Indian family life and affection. One day, the story is told, when Zafar Khan was away from home, the boy came in late for dinner, and on account of this his sister-in-law my aunt was vexed with him. My father, impetuously, as a boy will, jumped up and vowed that he would remain under a favour to no one and he ran away out of the house. When the elder brother returned, he found that the lad had been absent for some time and that there was not any news of him. My uncle could not rest for unhappiness and anxiety, but

how to trace and find the boy was a puzzle. He had perhaps disappeared into the streets of the city near their home in the country. Or he had, perhaps, even gone farther and left that country. For India is, as you know, composed of many countries. It was difficult to imagine, with no clue, where the rebellious and adventurous nature of youth might have taken him.

My uncle decided, after the first few days spent in searching, to visit the tomb of a Sufi sage and to pray there for the lad, his brother. He first arranged all things for the care and comfort of his wife and children. And then he set out for the saint's tomb and for days and nights he sat at the holy place, fasting, given up in prayer to the thought of his brother's safety, caring for nothing else at the time.

The young brother, during this time, began to feel restless, as if something stronger than himself were drawing him. And at length he started on his return to his brother's house, almost as if against his own will and inclination. And arriving there again, tired-out, for he had indeed come a long way, his first question was: "Where is my brother?"

Now my uncle's little boy was rejoiced to see him and called out: "He has been at the tomb of the saint, since you left. I will run and tell him."

And this child in such happiness to bring the good news to his father, ran all the way to the saint's

tomb, although it was some five miles distant. There he found his father sitting in prayer and meditation.

“ He has come back ! ” called the child.

And Zafar Khan, arising from his prayer, sprang to his feet and ran forward to welcome his brother back again. He outstripped his son, leaving his own child on the road to follow him, as he ran home in his joy to his brother, and seeing him, he fainted away, for he had fasted for many days.

Though the murshid from whom my father learned was a fakir, my father did not himself become a fakir. After he had progressed in his art he became an Ustad or professional teacher. And as soon as he had learned sufficiently from his murshid, he started out on a turni or musical tour, as is our custom, which is similar to the custom of the concert singer in the West, with the object of playing and singing in the towns through which he went.

Coming to Ajmere, he thought he could not leave that city without visiting the shrine of Moinuddin Chisti, a great Sufi, and the founder of that School of Sufi thought which is called Chisti and to which we belong. Moreover, my father, then quite a young man, was wondering in which direction to turn his steps, and where in all India he should go on his turni.

As he stood beside the tomb of the Sufi saint, offering his reverence, he was filled with a desire for a sign from the saint. As he continued to stand

there, reverent and expectant, he began to feel a little drowsy, as if his bodily senses had become dull. And for a moment all was blank before him. Then he seemed to see, coming up from the ground beside him, the form of the saint, whose face was veiled with flowers.

The saint seemed to raise himself into a sitting position, and with both hands lifting up the veil of flowers, he showed his face to my father. It seemed also to my father that before the vision ended the saint made a gesture in a certain direction, which my father following, brought him to Baroda. This is how my father, a man of the Punjab, came first to Baroda, where he was later to find his wife, and where his children were born and brought up.

When my father first arrived in Baroda, he had no intention of remaining there. He knew no one of influence in that town, nor had he connections of any kind there. It seemed purely by chance that he made an acquaintance who brought him to the house of my mother's father, Moula Bax, who was at that time tutor of music to the Maharajah Gaikwar and the chief figure in the musical world of the day.

Moula Bax, called by his contemporaries the "morning-star", for they believed he would bring the music of India into its own again, was first attracted to my father's personality. It was later that he discovered that he was perhaps one of the

finest exponents of the day of the style of music called *durpad*.

At Moula Bax's house in Baroda were held *durbars*, meetings of learned men of India, poets, philosophers, musicians, thinkers of all kinds. At one of these meetings my father played and sang and earned great praise. After this first success in Baroda, my father was brought by Moula Bax to play at the Court of the Maharajah Gaikwar, who asked him, after hearing him, with the courtesy of manner and the appreciation which won him the love of his people, if my father would be pleased to become attached to the Court?

This established my father's position in Baroda. He remained always a man quiet and reserved, but one who easily and quickly made friends. As a singer he was admired above all for *singing on the note* as we would say. And as a friend he was reliable and a peacemaker. He was not tempted even as a young man and a new-comer to Baroda, by the gayer side of life, which is the temptation of artists in all countries, although the Court was at that time famous for its brilliance, for the beauty of its dancers, for its spectacles and festivities and general magnificence. It was this serious side and this steadiness in my father's character, rather than his success as an artist, that prompted Moula Bax to invite him to live in his house, where he came to know and married my mother, the daughter of Moula Bax.

As Ustad my father lived a practical life in the world, always with regard and respect for religion. He was ever ready to show hospitality to fakirs and madzoubs, and he would invite them as holy men into his house, and would do what he could for them. He taught us, his children, to have great respect for them, and to see in them what possibilities of self-development there are in the human being. A madzoub will rarely give a blessing, but my father felt that their presence is a blessing, and so he would bring us near to any one of them who came into our house to rest or for food. He taught us to observe them and not to imitate or follow them, but rather to keep a balance in life, being extreme in no one thing.

It was his desire, above all, to bring his children up to live a happy and a normal life. For this reason when he discovered that my eldest brother, as a boy, had written poems, he destroyed them, not wishing my brother to have any idea of becoming a poet. Poetry, or mysticism, these seemed to him paths to tragedy and sorrow, leading away from practical and happy normal life.

He was liberal-minded. For instance, he made no rules for us, such as would prevent us, his sons, from marrying into any particular caste or religion. He was without prejudice of caste or race. In this he showed his Sufi conviction.

CHAPTER II

THE meaning of the name Moula Bax is "gifted one". And this name was bestowed on my grandfather when a boy, by a dervish to whom he had rendered a kindly service. Touched by the courtesy and goodwill of the lad, the aged holy man had blessed him and prophesied success and happiness for him.

"Will you accept a new name?" he had asked him. "Then take this name from to-day, Moula Bax—gifted one. And from to-day, with this name, happiness and prosperity will be with you. Go now into the world with my blessing, where fame and good fortune is waiting for you." So has the story been told to me.

One may say that this incident laid the foundation-stone of my grandfather's happy and prosperous career. It is difficult to measure the influence of a prophecy of this kind. Such an utterance may actually call the gift of self-expression into being. It may flood a mind with light, as a touch on an electric switch may fill a room with light. It may be compared to a sum of money placed in a bank, which at once begins to accumulate interest. The impetus and inspiration given by this blessing and prophecy carried Moula Bax on a wave of success, till the end of his days.

Since his parents had died when he was an infant,

Moula Bax had been adopted by an uncle and aunt, themselves not well-off and unable to do much for him, and very soon after this encounter with the dervish he set out under his new name from the neighbourhood of Jaipur, where he had lived with his adopted parents, and went to Delhi, the capital of India, hoping to find in that city some means of educating himself and also work, so that he might help to support his uncle and aunt. In Delhi he enquired everywhere what great musicians were in that town, and he heard that there was one singer who was very famous and admired above all others. He found out the house of this man and made friends with the servants who lodged at his gate. And there the boy would listen to the great man singing and practising, and would spend any free time he had in the intervals of his own work. And he would remain there at the gate-house listening often during the hours of the night, for in India the musicians often practise in the cool hours through the night in the seclusion of their own homes. By listening in this way, Moula Bax hoped to develop his own voice and to learn to sing in a good school.

After listening attentively to the master for some weeks, Moula Bax ventured to attempt to imitate him, and one day the singer, overhearing him, asked who it was he heard practising so assiduously at his gates? So the lad found himself brought before the singer and felt shy and uncomfortable, not

knowing what blame might be said to him for his boldness.

"I believe it was you I heard singing? May I know from whom you have learned?" the musician asked him.

"I have had no teacher," answered Moula Bax.

"But certainly you must have had lessons of some kind, or how did you come to know that classical melody? It was a variation of my own."

"Then if it does not displease you, may I say from whom I have learned," answered the shy boy.

"Have no fear. Only speak," said the great man.

"Thou alone art my teacher," said Moula Bax.

"Thou art my Ustad whose song I have tried to copy." These words spoken in embarrassment touched the singer so much that tears filled his eyes and he determined to take the lad as his pupil. And thus from him Moula Bax learned how to sing.

After he had perfected himself in the art of this great singer of Delhi, Moula Bax travelled farther south, filled with the ambition of studying also the music of Southern India which differs from that of Northern India, which shows the influence of Persia. But he could not find any Brahmin who was willing to instruct him in this music.

"To learn the art of the Brahmin, you must first be born a Brahmin," was the reply he invariably received. It was only after many attempts that he at last found a Brahmin willing to instruct him and to accept him as a pupil. And it was Moula Bax's

strange fortune later in life to be invited to sing in the temples of those who had once rejected him, and who later recognised him, according to the Hindu belief in rebirth and reincarnation, as the reincarnation of one of their greatest singers, Taygarajah.

Taygarajah reborn, they called him, and he sang in their temples garlanded in his honour, sitting on a specially prepared throne, wreathed with flowers for him. He showed the Brahmins the greatness of their own art, revivifying its ancient conventions. At Mysore he received the rank of a noble, with the signs of nobility, the necklace and the jewel for the turban, the sarpach and the Kalagi, given only to those who have rendered a service to their country.

He married and moved from place to place with tents and horses and servants. He lived on the offerings and presents brought to him at each place he sang. It was at Mysore that he once had to camp some way outside the town when the orthodoxy of the Brahmins still refused to let him sing in the temples there. And on this occasion he found himself without means, for the expenses of travelling had used up everything.

He took from his armband his last gold coin and gave it to my grandmother, and then with his veena, he went alone to sing in solitude by the river-bank. It happened that certain nobles, and greatmen of the town, coming to bathe in the river, listened there to him, and wondered who it might be singing so

beautifully, And they sent him offerings and invited him into the town, their prejudice against him quite overcome on hearing him. And so here he was now honoured and his music greatly enjoyed and valued. And offerings of all kinds were carried out to his family to their tents outside the town by the people who wished to show their respect to him.

Shortly after this Moula Bax came to Baroda, called there by the Maharajah Gaikwar who collected men as the jewels in his Crown and wished always to have round him the best minds of India as the chief ornaments of his Court. And here at Baroda Moula Bax settled and under the patronage of His Highness the Gaikwar he founded and directed the Gayan Shala or Academy of Indian Music, to which also another branch and development, the Academy of Western Music, was added soon after. The establishment and direction of these two institutions, together with the teaching of the system of notation which he himself had devised, were the chief practical achievements of Moula Bax.

CHAPTER III

THE Brahmins see in their music, the culmination of their science and their civilization. For whoever understands the laws of sound, to him the whole of mysticism is revealed.

Therefore the Brahmins guarded their music as

sacred. And with this point of view Moula Bax came into conflict twice: first, as I have said, when he made efforts to learn the Brahmin art himself; and a second time when he wished to teach the Brahmin music, and when, in order to teach it the better, he devised his system of notation and endeavoured to make written transcripts of this music. As I have said it was for the introduction and perfecting of this system of notation, that Moula Bax became widely known in India.

But the Brahmin point of view was that their art would vanish if it were made general. It would be misunderstood they thought, and would become degenerate in the process of being made acceptable and intelligible to the uninitiated and the masses; for, indeed, it presents the final stages of their mathematical science, an idea that can be better expressed in music, than in words, to those capable of receiving it.

And Moula Bax's view was that this ancient national music should be made known and spread, that the soul was already dying in it, that it was becoming more a dry system than a living art, and that it needed a new draught of life. These were the principles that supported him in his work at the Gayan Shala. In India at the present time music is almost a lost art, so degraded is the usual rendering of it.

In spite of innumerable difficulties and oppositions encountered in his musical reforms, my grand-

father, Moula Bax, was a happy and commanding personality. In his home he was like the roof tree of the house, where, under his sheltering genius, thirty or forty of his relatives lived at peace together. At his death the family broke up to some extent to my father's sorrow, the various members each more intent on going his own way. But while my grandfather lived one kitchen provided food for the whole household. It was a household where every one had his or her own part to play. The place of head of the house was taken by his aunt, and next in authority came his wife my grandmother, and then my mother. Each member of the household had his or her own obligation and responsibility to the one above in status.

I have heard many stories of Moula Bax's friendship and of his personal influence among all kinds of people, of his sociability, of his fortunate and happy nature, of his handsome bearing and his good horsemanship. My eldest brother was his constant companion, but I myself was only a few months old when he died.

To my grandfather's house, during his life-time and afterwards, there came friends of all persuasions. No distinctions were made and Hindus and Moslems met on an equality. My father's greatest friend was the Brahmin banker, Pershotam Bapoo. Myself a Sufi, was educated with Brahmin boys. In my young days I knew little about caste prejudice or religious intolerance. We were accustomed to see

the Hindoo religious procession stop for a moment before the precincts of the Moslem mosque and then proceed unmolested. In the same way the Moslems held their holidays undisturbed. This may be interesting as a fact to those who take interest in the welfare of India.

Also we were brought up with many friends, learning to call all younger women "sister" and older women "mother", regardless of the fact if they were Hindu or Moslem. Of the custom of purdah I will not speak here, since that is a subject that would take a book in itself to write about, and to explain fully, with all its exaggeration of practice.

But perhaps I may recall here an incident in Inayat Khan's life, who was present one day at a private conversation between the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Viceroy of India, when the Viceroy asked :

"How is it that there is peace in your state between Hindu and Moslem?"

To which the Nizam replied : "Because Moslem and Hindu are dear to me as my two eyes."

The Nizam honoured Hindu and Moslem equally, learned from them both. Brought up as a Mussulman, his chief adviser and officer was a Brahmin. A Sufi and a mystic, the Nizam appreciated the different aspects of truth that are expressed by these two different systems of religious ceremonial and instruction, behind which there is the same essential philosophy of life.

Interest in European education and science was a

rising tide, but life in our home remained the traditional life of India. In the house of Moula Bax, as I have said, his many relations lived together in the old patriarchal system. I have heard there is something of this kind of life still to be seen in certain great houses in Italy. My father refused, it is true, to be dependent on Moula Bax and was always responsible for his share in the household. But Moula Bax never liked the business side of this arrangement.

“Are they not my children also?” he would say to my father, when he insisted on providing for his own children. To which, I am told, my father made never a reply.

But in our family too, the interest in European education was strong, and my uncle, the son of Moula Bax, went to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music, and was, I think, the first, and perhaps the only Indian to take his degree of doctor of music there.

After taking his London degree my uncle visited Leipzig and other musical centres, and his return to Baroda coincided almost with his father's death. Whereupon his Highness the Gaikwar, who was pleased with his European success, wished to appoint him Director of the Academy of Western Music, which had, as I have said, also grown up under my grandfather's direction, as a counterpart to the Gayan Shala or school of Indian music. But the Diwan, the chief minister, would not give his con-

sent to this appointment. This Diwan was a sadhu. Perhaps I may add a little later some explanation of the terms sadhu and madzub and fakir, and say something of the influence of such men in Indian life. The Diwan felt that my uncle was too young and untried a man to succeed to Moula Bax. But my uncle, with his newly-won diploma and his London gown and hood, did not like to take a secondary place under, as it seemed to him, a less learned man of the older school. For my uncle was also versed in Indian music. So for a time he left Baroda, with the Diwan's permission, and went as professor of music to the Territory of the Maharajah of Nepal. And after some years there, he returned to take up his duties in Baroda, and to carry on his father's life-work.

My brothers, Inayat Khan and Maheboob Khan, and also our cousin, Ali Khan, all studied and taught in these two schools of music at Baroda which had been instituted by Moula Bax. For a time, in fact, they devoted the whole of their energies to this work.

I may perhaps add here a note on Indian music, which is very different to western music, although from a philosophical point of view the music of east and west are closely allied, being founded on the same tune and the same rhythm. Historically also they are allied, being both expressions of the same Aryan race. But they have developed in different directions. Also the Indian music is immeasurably older.

In India music is performed to the few. It is performed before a small circle of listeners in a room or in a temple, while in the West a singer is trained to make his voice heard in a vast theatre or hall, and to reach hundreds of people. And an orchestra or band sounds through a park.

It takes years of training before a singer in India becomes skilled in his art. And before he can consider himself a musician and an artist, he must also be a composer. The Indian musician will tune his instrument in the presence of the few people who are seated round him to listen to him. As he tunes it he tries to feel his way into their minds and their moods. He has no set programme to perform. He will choose a raga or melody which seems to him suitable for the moment, and he will improvise upon it, like a poet who chooses a certain subject which he thinks appropriate and then composes in the presence of his hearers a new poem on that subject.

The singer is trained to sing softly. We admire quality in voice, and truth and purity of tone, and flexibility in reaching the notes, which are caught as a ball is caught. Our way is a most natural way of music.

An educated Indian can only begin to understand and to enjoy western music after some time. The western voice-production sounds to the eastern ear forced and unnatural. It is like a hammering on the brain : the delicacy and feeling and expressiveness of the human voice seems lost in the effort of

the production. With highly-trained singers this artificiality and harshness of voice becomes usually more noticeable, and the natural beauty of the voice seems to us sacrificed to technicality and to volume of sound.

Our Indian ragas or classical melodies represent moods, or else they represent certain aspects of time or of nature. A raga may be called a design or pattern or it may be called a poetical picture. Or it may be described as a mathematical formula. The knowledge of the construction of the raga is in itself an education. For this reason in India music has always been considered inaccessible to the masses of the people.

A singer chooses his raga, or theme, and constructs his own song upon it. His improvisations prolong the emotion which the raga produces. By repetitions the value of the chosen melody is brought out and shown. And the singer stamps his own individuality and personality upon it. The repetitions correspond in a manner to chords and their harmonization.

Although western singing is difficult to understand and unmelodious to Indian ears, at the same time the very highest western art can soon be understood and appreciated. For instance, such diverse examples as a symphony of Beethoven, or the work of Mozart or of Handel are quickly admired. Also we were always keenly interested in studying the use of western musical instruments.

our mother who wished only happiness for her children. She also knew much of the Hindu teaching about the qualities of character, and habits of mind and manner, which bring happiness and prosperity in life. For the Hindu religion, when understood, shows itself deeply scientific in its analysis of human types and in its comprehension of human character and life.

She had one custom which may be called a superstition, for she would hang a black cord round her children's necks to protect them from evil. This custom is very like that seen in the West of hanging medallions or holy pictures round the necks of children.

I was a small child when my mother died, and at her death my aunt took the place of my mother to me. And it was noticed that my aunt's character changed at this time, and she became most gentle and affectionate. Before this time, she had never shown any interest or kindness to the children. But after my mother's death she showed all the tenderness of a mother to me. Of course, I was too young to judge myself of any change that may have taken place in her, but it was a thing often noticed, and due, it was believed, by other members in our family, to the power and presence of my mother's own loving spirit guiding her. I may perhaps remark here that the Sufi does not encourage interest in spiritualism, believing that in this pursuit one may delude oneself, and also believing that it is an

unnatural and unwholesome interest. But any experience such as this one which I relate, he accounts most valuable and sacred, though such an experience is so subtle and intimate that it can hardly be expressed to another, or explained, or even spoken of.

There is, besides, the difficulty of explanations in words, also an inclination in the mystically-minded which prompts him to guard his spiritual observation and his inner experience for himself alone. Thus these secret things become to him his own ladder which, like Jacob's ladder, reaches ever higher out of his sight. In his silence regarding these experiences there is no selfish wish for concealment, or desire to build up for his own use alone, some knowledge or peculiar power with which to feed his own ambition. So much lies outside the grasp of exact description in words, and also so much there is that can only grow and be comprehended in stillness.

It is, for instance, in the modern West, rather than in the East, that you will hear a clear explanation given of the theory of reincarnation, for this ages-old doctrine of the Hindus is a subtle one, subtle and delicate in all its foundations and its implications. So also with every experience of communion with those who have departed from this life.

Usually the first personal knowledge one has of this kind rests upon a link of human sympathy, in

itself so delicate as hardly to be declared in words. How shall one describe in words the link of the affection one feels for another? Later as experience increases, these glimpses of another life become clearer, and cover also a wider field.

At several times of great difficulty in our later lives, during our travels in alien countries, after my brothers and I had left our own country, my mother has appeared to one or other of us in vision, bringing healing and consolation and peace. The Sufi believes, as I have said, that the link with the soul that is departed depends upon the strength of the personal connecting link of affection. And the Sufi believes that the soul of the departed is freer than we are, freer to go where it pleases, and where its interest lies and attracts it. In exactly this same way the individual is linked with the Divine power. Our link with the Power that is without us and that sustains us, depends upon the strength of our own loyalty and devotion, though at the same time it must be remembered that the Divine Being pardons rather than judges.

If we do not encourage mediumistic tendencies it is because these have never been encouraged by any religious leader. According to the Sufi view there is no question of right or wrong in this. It is a question of advisability. Life in this world is an opportunity not to be trifled with. Those who have passed, have had theirs: we do not help them by neglecting ours in order to be with them before our

time. The Sufi believes that communications from another world penetrate to our notice without the mediumship of another, as we become fitted to receive them.

Glimpses of a life beyond this reach us through our physical senses : their interpretation, therefore, depends on the condition of our own minds, and we can only describe them, even when we accept them, by comparing them to those physical sensations with which we are familiar. For these experiences are real, as real as the experiences of physical sight and hearing and touch. And thus it is that we may speak of them by saying they come with the beauty of music. Or that they come with the beauty of light. Or with a sweet perfume. Or as a reviving and a life-giving touch.

CHAPTER V

THE study of music is a very different matter in the East, where the connection of teacher and pupil is a much more intimate one than in the West, owing largely to the fact that the ancient music of India has never been written down. The pupil on first being accepted, brings to his master an offering of fruit and flowers. The master in his turn offers the pupil something sweet to eat. The pupil also brings with him a cord wound loosely round his wrist, and this the teacher binds tight. Incense is lighted and

He taught me the traditional songs of our family. "I entrust them to you. You must be mindful on what occasions it is permitted to sing them," he told me. These songs may only be sung before other singers and to musicians at their gatherings. They are songs to be sung to artists.

My uncle used to take me about with him when he gave lessons to his pupils, so that I might meet different kinds of people and personalities. This seemed always one of the chief ideas of our home education. If a poet or a great man came to the house, the children were brought in as a lesson for them, so that they might observe and know about greatness of talent and character. And my uncle made me accompany him, also with the idea of educating me in manners and behaviour. His wife was that aunt who became to me as my mother after my own mother's death. She too died a few years after my mother, when I was still a child. Her death was a great misfortune for me, and my love for her remains so clear that I feel that if she had lived I could never have left India if it had meant leaving her too. It is strange that the impression on a child may consciously last so long.

My second uncle Dr. Pathan, after he had returned from Nepal, used also sometimes to take me to a gala or function at the Court. "Be ready thou at such and such a time and not a minute later," he would say to me. And I would run off in the greatest possible excitement to ask my father's permission to go.

“ Did he *ask* you ? ” my father would invariably ask. “ Then if he invited you, you may go.”

My aunt used to bathe and dress me carefully in fresh muslin clothes, combing and parting my hair. I had always to show myself to my father before starting out. And first, before going before him, I would make my hair rough, and disarrange it again. I would never like to show myself to my father with my hair so beautifully smooth.

My father disliked above all anything that he considered womanly in a boy or man. Men are men, and women are women, he would say. Women must not smoke or affect any manly ways. Men on the other hand must avoid softness and luxury. For this reason he also disliked many Western habits introduced into our simple Indian life. “ Simple and dignified ” were the two words of praise he used.

I was much younger than my brothers. I was fourteen years younger than my eldest brother, and so as a child I was more in the company of my father than my brothers, from the time of the death of my mother, when I was a few years old, until his death, when I was about thirteen. My father used to tell me many stories. He would tell stories of heroes who were brave in danger and tolerant to a defeated enemy, as examples to be followed in life. He would tell stories of the chivalry and bravery of Hazrat Ali, son-in-law to the prophet Mahomet. And stories of the youth of Rama who was brought up in the forest with his brother by the saint Vasishta, who taught

the two boys how to swim and fish in the cold mountain streams in every season of the year, to wrestle, to shoot with bow and arrow, and to train their bodies in skill and endurance. He told me stories of how Vasishta taught the boys to observe the animals and plants, and the changing seasons, and the secrets and laws of nature. And stories of how they learned to fast. And of how they returned, strong and manly, after many years of life lived in the jungle, and of their beautiful manners among people again. I used to love his stories.

"Tell me a story, Abba (father)," I would say, and he would never refuse.

But I never lost my fear of him. Nor did I ever feel able to confide in him. I remember as a child he used to take me out driving with him. And for me, sitting up there on the seat beside him was not altogether a pleasure. I never knew quite what to say to him. And driving through the streets I used to be afraid that we might see any of the boys from the school. I would gladly have avoided them. And if by chance some one of them saw us driving by and smiled or winked at me, I was so uncomfortable. And if my father noticed and asked, "Who was that?" this was the worst thing that could happen, I used to think, and I used to feel quite put out and embarrassed.

Many small memories crowd in that can only be of interest as showing the pleasures and the incidents in the life of an Eastern child. At home there used

to be a market on Fridays, a market where everything was to be found, objects of every description, and also animals of all kinds. As a child I often used to go there with my father, and one day I saw there a little mare with a foal. I suppose I was then seven or eight years of age, and I tell the story to show how gentle my father was at heart. The little mare was marked with white and her foal delighted me. No matter where we went that morning, through the market, my thoughts were still on that beautiful little foal ; and whenever I could get the opportunity, I went back to look at it.

“Look at that little foal ; isn't it a lovely little foal ? ” I said to my father, and that was all that was said about it.

On the way home, I remember, I walked quietly and I was thinking of that little foal. Suddenly my father stopped and looked at me.

“Do you want that little pony ? ” he asked.

“Yes,” I said, and the tears jumped into my eyes.

Without more words, we turned and went back to the market. The mare and her foal had been sold. My father sought out the man who had bought them, and offered him a higher price for them.

The man, smiling, sold them to him for the price he himself had given. What a good man, I thought, and his action I never forgot. I walked home in a kind of heaven beside my little horse.

No one at home was pleased to see it, because we had already more animals than we needed. It was

felt to be a senseless piece of extravagance to have bought it. But all this passed over my head. I had my beautiful little pony, I hugged it, I loved it. I spent all my time playing with it. I thought of little else. I failed at school, and my father was so disappointed: but these were clouds, the foal was the real thing in my life at the moment. And the incident of this gift made a strong link between me and my father.

I remember among our animals, there used to be a bull in the stable, a fierce animal with a ring through its nose, by which it was controlled and led. But I had no fear of him. My idea was to ride him, he was my elephant and I was the mahout. In the silent hour of the afternoon, when all the world was resting, I would go quietly to the stable, a slip of a small boy, clamber up the bull's side, sit astride his neck, my hands on its great curving horns. It seems like a dream to me now that a child would do such a thing. But in those days, the bull and his stable, and myself as mahout made a secret happy world of our own. The name of the bull was Motya, which means a pearl. He had been given to us by a Brahmin friend who wished him to have a happy home.

My interests were always outside of school. I loved animals and I loved games. I used to think I wanted to be an officer and I had a company of little friends whom I used to drill. My lieutenant was Babo Khan, my cousin, a couple of years older than

myself. Sometimes I had a parade and would go trotting up and down on my pony, reviewing my soldiers. I had a children's band, too, which I used to conduct. One day I remember I was drilling my company when I saw the prince Fateh Singhravo ride out. I drew my small sword and, standing before my men, I brought them to the salute. The prince reined in his horse. He always rode the most thoroughbred, high-spirited animals. And he came slowly past me to take the salute, handsome and graceful, and with a smile that went straight to my heart. The prince was a fine horseman, and fiery and impetuous as any of his steeds. He held the hearts of us all, such was his charm.

"When you look at him, you see at once why God made him Crown Prince," my father used to say. It was that quality in his character that prompted him to recognize the play of us children with such grace that endeared him to his people. He seemed to recognize and respond at once to any emotion of real sincerity. I remember my old father heard the people round him saying one day when he was out, "there comes the prince"; and he put up his hand to shade his eyes which were dazzled by the sun, trying to see where the prince was, so that he might bow to him. The prince noticed the desire of the old man, who could not see him, and he rode close up to my father, and saluted him first, with that smile of his, so courteous and characteristic and beautiful, before my father had time to salute him.

poned his going for a time. It was a great sorrow for my second brother too, that Inayat Khan had to leave us. There was always the closest bond and friendship between those two. At last the day came when we all went down to the station, carrying garlands of flowers, to say farewell. I was so unhappy I could only stare at his face. He bought me a whistle. Then he noticed that a schoolboy friend of mine had joined me, so he went off for a moment to buy him a whistle too. But I did not want my whistle. I could only look at him. He consoled me with promises. And when the train went away, I was inconsolable. For days nothing pleased me, nor seemed of any use. My father suggested this and that to amuse me, but I was too sad to care for any distraction.

And I wondered so much about him. Would he become a fakir, an ascetic? Would he become a hermit and live away from the world? Remembering my father's teaching, this made me afraid for him. A normal and manly life in the world was my father's idea of duty. So honourable and upright himself, my father's ideas were strongly impressed on all of us. They seemed to us the only right and proper ones.

Inayat Khan after this remained away from home. First he settled at Hyderabad, and then later he went to Calcutta. And I came to feel that no matter where he might be and no matter how busy he was, he was with me in thought. He wrote to advise my

father to let me go to the College at Aligarh, but my father did not wish this for me, and Inayat Khan did not press the matter. I should have loved to go, and for a time I thought it must come true, and that I really would go to Aligarh, since Inayat Khan wanted it. I thought everything he wanted must happen.

CHAPTER VI

No account of my boyhood can omit a description of our Indian weddings. You know in India weddings are our great days: they take the place of theatre-going and every other form of festive gathering of other countries. For us in India, a wedding is the supreme occasion for every kind of hospitality and spectacle.

You will ask if the young couple become well-acquainted with each other before marriage? And the answer is yes; and from the day of betrothal and before that day until the actual wedding, during many weeks, the customs prescribed promote a gradual building-up of an harmonious rhythm of good understanding between bride and groom. What are the differences between husband and wife but differences of rhythm?

It is thought sometimes that women have little influence in India, but this is not true. The Indian women may be more occupied within their own homes than are women in other countries, but

their influence within the home is all-important. There are many ceremonies in the Hindu courtship: there is the game with flowers, the game with fruit; there is a certain day when the ring is hidden and the young couple search for it and find it together, a custom which is also usual in Moslem weddings. There is a ceremony which is called *jelawa* in the Urdu language, which is also a Moslem custom, when a scarf of the bridegroom's dress is taken and tied to a portion of the bride's dress. There are songs and serenades. And it is by the ladies and women of the two families that all these games, and singing-games and ceremonies that take place between the two parties, between the bridegroom and his companions and the companions of the bride, are arranged and supervised.

After the betrothal is announced, it is made public news by a public procession, and the bridegroom then arrives at the house of the bride and carries her to her *palchi* or carriage as a sign of assuming responsibility and protection of her, before he mounts his own horse and rides beside her through the streets. These processions are the great festivities of the Indian people and their principal amusements, and many families ruin themselves to provide costly and lavish entertainment and spectacles for the people at such times. To-day many princes, in order to set a good example, make their wedding processions as simple as possible, and lately a very rich man in Jaipur made all the people wonder at the

simplicity of his son's marriage, for he gave the money, usually spent on such occasions, to various charities.

There is a second procession on the actual wedding day. And at the marriage ceremony special thrones, garlanded with flowers, are prepared for bridegroom and bride, who face each other, veiled and clad in beautiful garments. The wedding dresses of the rich are sometimes priceless heirlooms, handed down for generations, and are covered with needlework, jewelled and of exquisite workmanship, but even the garments of the poor are beautiful. Is there any dress more graceful than the simplest sari of an Indian woman?

At the moment of the marriage ceremony, the Hindus believe that there is a special divine protection over bride and bridegroom, as if the marriage were also made in heaven. And the spectator may then behold a mystery. For the beauty then seen on the faces of the bride and groom, can never after be forgotten. This moment must be seen and studied at that moment: its charm cannot be analysed. We are made of a mysterious world, the mystery is in us, and it expresses and unveils itself at such moments. Even a couple not noticeable for good looks will wear a look of beauty and exaltation, that each of them, seeing the other at that moment, must for ever after remember. Their poise, their dignity, the grace of their bearing is the culmination of a rhythm started many weeks before.

All the many ceremonies are in reality so many precautions taken to avoid every possible cause of jar and misunderstanding between the two. And the bridegroom feels it an honourable sign of his family, that he shall learn to win the maiden by his gentleness and devotion of manner on all these occasions. While she for her part, with her chief attendant, has for many weeks carried a dagger, as a sign of her determination and her power to ward off every evil thing from her. Bride's maid and bride sleep with these daggers beneath their pillows, armed even in sleep against all evil influence. These daggers, studded with diamonds if the bride is the daughter of a maharajah, will be of simpler design in poorer families. And so also with the other details of dress and observance. The kagana, or gloves which both bride and groom wear, covering the back of the hand, may be made of gold and jewels or they may be of plainly-embroidered material.

For many weeks before marriage, both bridegroom and bride have had specially appointed baths and massage, with perfumed ointments made of certain nuts and flowers. In our tropical climate we prescribe five washings before offering any prayer. And these specially appointed baths, and treatment of skin and body are not only beneficial to health, but are beautifying, and also etherealize the being, and so preclude the danger of physical repulsion. A moment of repulsion may start a wrong rhythm, and not only our tropical climate,

but the manner of our lives makes the educated Indians sensitive in every way also to sound and to smell. Think for one thing, how the Brahmins have been vegetarians not for one or two generations only, but for hundreds of generations ; and vegetarianism is a sign of sensitiveness and is productive of sensitiveness. Think also how the Moslems have refrained from strong drink and wine for centuries. This natural physical delicacy increases in the secluded home-life.

After the marriage ceremony the rhythm is still controlled by many customs, and gradually brought to a close. For instance, the younger sister of the bride or her attendant bridesmaid washes the hooves of the bridegroom's horse with milk, which signifies gentleness, and she winds flowers into the harness. For a second time the bridegroom carries the bride in his arms in public, as he carries her across the threshold of their dwelling. The masses of withered flowers are collected, and some thrown into the river where they glide away downstream. The special wedding garments worn by the couple in the weeks preceding the marriage are presented to their attendants. Food and money are distributed among certain poor families. And offerings are brought for many Thursdays after the marriage to the tombs of saints.

As a child I used to think a wedding was like Indra. Indra is the heaven of the Hindus. To every people there is a different idea of heaven. In

Christian countries the descriptions of heaven seem to be greatly influenced by the visions and symbolical teaching of the Revelations of that great mystic St. John. But the heaven of the Hindus is pictured more like a happy and brilliant court, where a king and queen are enthroned and surrounded by the arts and genius of humanity, the talent and beauty of their subjects. And, indeed, in the Hindu wedding bridegroom and bride are like a king and queen, who are honoured in an atmosphere where all is tuned to a note of exultant and mystical beauty.

Speaking of these Hindu customs it is necessary to point out that the details naturally differ in different parts of that vast country. For it must be remembered that the territory of the Nizam of Hyderabad alone is about the size of all France, while the kingdom of the Maharajah Gaikwar of Baroda is only a little smaller. It is also the temperament of the Hindu people to go to extremes, and thus their ceremonies tend in all parts of India to become more and more ornate and elaborate. The Moslem wedding ceremony is in itself extremely simple, but the Indian Moslems have adopted many Hindu rites and customs. The Moslem wedding only requires that man and wife accept each other before the Kazi, or chief. The bride answers for herself to the Kazi. A few dates are eaten together and a few glasses of sherbet are drunk: this is all that this democratic faith requires.

The bride does not take her husband's name, and when he writes to her after marriage, he addresses her by her maiden name. Both have equal rights in divorce. We say in the East, there is no lover in all the world like a Moslem lover; no lover of such chivalry, or of such manly depth and endurance of feeling. And Moslem literature is rich in the poetry of love.

There is much misconception of the Moslem religion in many Western countries, and here I may perhaps speak of one source of misunderstanding. It is not true that in this faith the position of women is not held high. "Heaven lies at the feet of the mother" is its teaching. And to take but one example of the Eastern attitude to the women of the family, I remember how proudly Inayat Khan, the eldest son, brought home the first money he earned to my mother, and then with what pleasure and delight it was given in my mother's presence to my sister, according to the Eastern custom. The first money earned by the son (this is the usual custom) is brought to the mother, but is presented to the sister as a token of the brotherly bond.

In the education of children and of young people, even the most ancient writings of the Hindus speak of the value and effect of the rhythms of different mental activities, and the Brahmins have made this particular kind of analysis of the human mind and nature a special science of their own. Failure and trouble the Brahmins will always ascribe to some

fault in rhythm, and it is in their ceremonies such as the wedding ceremonies that you will see this science of the regulation of rhythm put into practice. At the coronation of a prince also, for instance, it is the work of the Brahmin priest who is appointed royal priest, to inspire the prince by suggestion and in other ways, so that he may recognize the rhythm which will be successful in his life. And as I have said the wedding ceremonial and wedding customs of the Hindus are most instructive from this point of view.

And speaking on this point, I remember as a boy going to a wedding which made a great impression upon me because of its perfection in every way. At this wedding the beauty of the bride was startling. Gentle and graceful, shy, but with shining eyes, she moved in her delicate silken draperies through a glowing background of flowers and colours, arranged and massed with such careful taste and skill. I remember thinking that surely there had never been a more beautiful maiden.

The mother of the bridegroom had set her heart upon this marriage, but she had died shortly after it had been arranged. The wedding arrangements nevertheless continued, and with all the elaborate decoration and hospitality, with all the beauty of detail she had planned. Everything happened just as it should, and the central figures of bride and bridegroom seemed to be the very ideal of young happiness and love. A few days after the wedding

the bride died, and mourning took the place of rejoicing. I remember as a boy hearing the wise old people saying that a different date should have been chosen for the wedding, after the death of the bridegroom's mother. There was a general feeling that some alteration should have been made, something done to keep back the rhythm. Everything had been too intense, the beauty had been too much, the perfection too complete, the rhythm too swift. A reaction of some kind was inevitable.

And what were the happiest days in my life as a child in India? A great event for me each year was the day of Bakr Ede, when Islam celebrates the double feast of the commemoration of the sacrifice made by Abraham and Isaac and of the pilgrimage to Mecca. This holiday is variable and falls each year at a different season. A gun used to be fired on the eve of the holiday and after hearing that gun, I would have no sleep, thinking of the elephant that would come for me next morning. As soon as day dawned I would be up and beginning to dress. Already at four o'clock in the morning, bathed and in my best muslin clothes, wearing my golden ornaments, I was running forwards and backwards to the window, to watch for the first sight of the elephant, which would come from the royal stables with magnificent trappings and a gilded umbria, a kind of gilded coach, on its back. What a moment that was when the elephant came into sight and then stopped before our door!

The start was so interesting. First the huge elephant had to sit down, a most entertaining performance for any child to watch. Then came the exciting adventure of climbing the ladder on its side, and mounting into the umbria. Then, after you have taken your seat, there is the expectation of that great moment when the elephant rises to its feet with a double swing, forward and back again, of the gilded sadhi-umbria and everyone inside it. At last we are off, with waving of hands to the grown-up people who are watching us with amused and happy faces. The elephant was for the joy of the children. The grandeur of the journey, the majestic pacing of the great animal, the interest of making our way through the streets, as we looked down, it seemed to us, from a glorious height, made such a day for us that no child can have ever had a greater pleasure in any car, or on any Christmas-day, than we had on those royal and yearly elephant rides.

Another great day each year was Moharrum, which is the commemoration of the martyrdom of the grandsons of the prophet Mohamet. This is a day when new resolutions are made, and special prayers and intercessions are offered. The Brahmins also respect these anniversaries, feeling the reverence that fills these days, and Hindu chiefs and leaders will approach the Tasiah, the tomb, which commemorates the death of the two martyrs, to make special prayers there. The Tasiah is actually pre-

pared by the State. In form it is either like a large Tomb or it is in the form of the Mosque, and is covered with a rich paper embroidered in hand-work. It is decorated with flowers and figures. On one side there is the Buracq, the mythical animal upon which the prophet Mohamet made his ascent from Jerusalem to the "furthest mosque", in other words to the gateway of heaven. On the other side of the Tasiah there is a symbolical female figure representing beauty.

For several days this decorated Tasiah is kept near the palace, and here the people come to pay their respects and to worship. On one of these holy days, the Maharajah, as representative of his people, comes himself to pay respect to this holy shrine, and on this day a certain sweetmeat and sherbet are distributed, a portion being reserved for the Maharajah, which he accepts from the priest and which is then carried by an aide-de-camp to the palace. On this occasion the musicians sing the "marsia", the "messiah", the special songs and hymns which are appointed for this day of mourning. On the last day of this holy festival the decorated Tasiah is taken in a great procession to the river-bank, the Maharajah himself leading the procession followed by the great chiefs and nobles, who accompany other smaller Tasiahs, provided by themselves, which come behind the great Tasiah provided by the State. At the river-bank, the decorations and coverings of the Tasiahs are slipped into the water,

the tombs themselves being preserved for the next occasion. This is a wonderful scene.

On the Bakr Ede the Maharajah also takes part in the procession which goes from the palace to the place of Moslem prayer. It was so inspiring to see how the chief of his people was at one with them at this moment. His elephant would remain in the shade of trees near the gate of the place of worship, where thousands of his subjects had assembled, and after the special prayers for the occasion were said, the procession would return to the palace again, with the guns booming their salutations. If, as sometimes happened, the procession from the palace arrived a little late, the prayer would nevertheless commence punctually, but usually there was already a brilliant spectacle assembled as the call to the first prayer sounded.

Before my day, before I was born I suppose, there was a day in the lives of my two brothers and our cousin, that I often heard of, when at the Bakr Ede two elephants actually appeared for the children instead of one. It happened in this way. There were guests at the palace and a message came on the very morning of the holy day, that no elephant could be spared for the children, who had been looking forward for days to the elephant and talking of nothing else. So Moula Bax, when he heard of this message, asked for his carriage and went at once to call on the superintendent of the stable arrangements who came down to see him and to

explain what had happened. All the umbrias were in use he said, and there were only some old howdahs remaining. A howdah is a less important and a more everyday affair. So at last the superintendent arranged, to avoid disappointment, that two elephants with howdahs should be sent, and Moula Bax drove home again satisfied, knowing the children would not be deprived of their treat. Imagine their delight when two elephants arrived for them. And whenever they used to tell me of this memorable day, they never forgot to speak also of the lovely expression on the face of Moula Bax, as he stood there gazing at them until they were out of sight. The kindness of his face, as he looked at them at that moment, was fixed for ever in their memory.

CHAPTER VII

FATHER and mother encouraged friendship among their sons, liking them to appear inseparable in their affection for each other. This good and kind man, my father, only desired never to hurt another and that his children would never hurt or displease anyone, but would go gently and quietly, with modesty. He was a charitable man. The orphan child of poor parents in the village he took into our house, and educated together with me. When I had a new dress or cape, this child had one too : we were treated alike in all things. My father was so careful,

I remember, when talking to the children of servants, or of poor people, never to let them feel any difference or condescension. And he taught us, his sons, not to look down on any menial task, and we would groom or saddle the horses ourselves, whenever occasion demanded.

Devoted to his own art, he was too happy in any success of ours. He would sacrifice himself for our sake, never wishing us to lose any opportunity of learning. His greatest pleasure was to hear we had been with a learned man, of no matter what country. By his very presence, he gave us a line in life. Disliking any extreme asceticism of life as much as profligacy, he was like a soldier of life—vigorous and natural, with nobility of bearing, refined without loss of manliness. We gave him our respect and our admiration; we obeyed him. But speaking for myself I never became intimate with him, and perhaps learned a certain shyness in his presence which could never be lost again.

He died when I was about thirteen years of age, and then my eldest brother, who had been for some time now travelling and living away from home, became my guardian. And at this time he thought it would be well if I learned something practical, so by his advice I was apprenticed to an engineering firm. He saw a future in this of a good profession for me, and just then after my father's death, life was not so easy for the sons. One day, my sleeve catching in a piece of machinery, my hand and arm

were somewhat badly hurt. I had never had any real interest in the work, and after I had recovered from this accident, Inayat Khan sent for me to come to him to Calcutta, where he was living at this time and directing a school of music.

He arranged for me to travel there with one of the parents of a pupil of his, and I shall never forget arriving at his house, and seeing him watching from his balcony for me. He seemed so glad to see me.

"How's the hand?" he called at once. "Show me your hand."

As we met, I bowed and touched his feet, as is our custom. But he raised me up quickly in his arms, not giving me time to bow low, and he kissed my forehead. When he had left our home in Baroda he had gone to Hyderabad in the hope of founding a school of music there such as our grandfather Moula Bax had founded at Baroda with the support of the Maharajah Gaikwar. And after he had been at Hyderabad a short time, there seemed every chance of this. For Inayat Khan had the honour of singing before the Nizam, a great patron of all the arts, who showed him much kindness and favour.

It happened in this way. Inayat Khan, after his successful musical tour, accepted the call of His Highness Sri Krishna Pershad, the chief minister of Hyderabad, to teach music to his daughters. One day this minister, whose title in India is Maharajah, heard that the Nizam was going to Mola Ka-Pahar,

a mountain in the neighbourhood, and coming just then into the room in the palace where my brother was teaching the children, he said, "Ustad (master) this is the best chance you could have of seeing the Nizam. I invite you to come with me to the mountain."

It had always been my brother's unspoken desire to sing to the Nizam, and he told me that when he saw him at last, the beauty of the scene made a sight beyond anything he had ever dreamed of or could have imagined. Through generations, the etiquette and grandeur of the Mogul emperors had been brought to a perfection of splendour; while there was something about the man himself, so my brother said, which was a charm to hold one.

Inayat Khan sang there and played and was thanked by the Nizam, and he received also a bag of golden ashrafis, which he sent by a friend indirectly to my father, feeling a little shy about offering his father a sum of money. But at the same time he wrote a letter home, full of enthusiasm and pleasure at the reception his songs had received. And throughout his life, he carried with him the astonishing memory of his first impression of that marvellous, that beautiful, and in so many ways, unworldly personality.

On a second occasion Inayat Khan was sent for to sing before the Nizam at a brilliant State durbar. And afterwards the Nizam sent for him to sing to him in his own room. There he found him alone,

without orders or jewels or any sign of rank. He found a man who had accustomed himself to sleep on a strip of carpet on the floor, and who used to go by night quietly and unobserved, to meditate at the lonely tomb of a Sufi saint.

It was this Nizam who placed an emerald ring on my brother's hand and named him Tansen. Because he said he had brought back the glory of Tansen to India. Tansen is the great legendary singer of India, who may be compared to Orpheus of the Greeks.

The Nizam was himself a Sufi mystic, who accomplished something real in his life as a healer. A poet, the mystical side of his nature was fostered by his close friendship with the Sufi mystic and poet Dagh. The Maharajah Sri Krishna Pershad, the chief minister who was a Brahmin, showed himself also a Sufi in his verses.

It was at Hyderabad, whither he had gone full of enthusiasm in the cause of Indian music, that Inayat Khan met and came first under the care of his murshid.

His meeting with his murshid marked the turning-point in his life: it was most strange and unexpected, and Inayat Khan has often told the story of it. At Hyderabad he had made the acquaintance of the Sheik ul Mashaik, or chief of the Sufis, an influential man, much honoured and well-known. Khairul Momin Saheb, this great religious chief, had showed, from the beginning of their acquaintance, a marked preference for my brother. They

did not, however, ever speak of Sufism, nor did Inayat Khan express any desire of becoming in any way a follower of his, or connected with the chain of Sufis.

One day, when my brother arrived at a reception at his house, there seemed to be a general air of expectation, as if some special guest were awaited. And presently there arrived a grey-bearded old man, who seemed, so my brother said, to bring light into the house with him. And instantly on seeing him, my brother told me, he felt he had known this aged stranger somewhere before. He felt at once a connection with him, as if with a sudden thrill of recognition he had found his master.

The aged stranger spoke to the host for some time, and then he asked Khairul Momin Saheb who Inayat Khan was? He had noticed him at once, among all the assembly.

“Who is the young man who draws me here so strangely?”

“Your holiness, he is a young man filled with a desire to be helped and inspired by your inspiration,” said the Sufi chief.

And thus Inayat Khan met his murshid, Sayed Abu Hashim Maduni.

It was so interesting that Khairul Momin Saheb had seen his unspoken aspiration clear as in a mirror, before him. It was interesting also that he had not felt able to give Inayat Khan the initiation, but had desired that the young man, who so attracted him,

should become the pupil of his own murshid. There is a language of the soul which needs neither explanation nor discussion, but is direct and swift and clear.

When Inayat Khan met his murshid, he felt at once that he had met the guide of his life, and that he had arrived at the desire of his life. The recognition of that first moment became a continually stronger link. In the East we consider the relation between murshid and pupil one that can never be broken : it is a bond that can never be removed, and which reaches into eternity. Fana-fi-sheik is the mystical participation, by which two souls become so united as to live and feel almost as one. Often my brother, from the very first days after meeting the murshid, would feel if his murshid wished to speak to him, and at such moments, wherever he happened to be in those days, he would make an effort to go to him, and always found, that what he had felt was indeed actually true. Inayat Khan was living then actually at Secunderabad, which is close to Hyderabad, where his murshid resided.

Gradually the telepathic link became so strong between them, that all that my brother did or felt was known to his murshid, and this made him wonder very much in those days. "How is it possible my murshid knew that?" he would say—though he himself would feel if his murshid were ill, or calling him.

Sayed Abu Hashim Maduni was a pir, a peer, a

noble, of a distinguished family, which traced their descent from the Prophet. Inayat Khan often visited his murshid, the pir, in his house. But here is a point to be noted—they never spoke on what are called spiritual matters. They spoke on everyday matters of life, just as any two men, one older and experienced, one younger and devoted, might converse. They would walk in the garden and speak of the gardener of the plants and flowers. Or else perhaps Inayat Khan would sing or play to his murshid.

“Now, let me see, how does such and such a raga go?” the murshid would say, or else he would say, “It seems to me that the music of the South has such and such a quality.” And Inayat Khan would take some such remark as a permission, that he might take his veena, to sing or play the raga mentioned or to illustrate the point discussed.

They never spoke on metaphysics. Nor did my brother ever bring forward problems to discuss. On one occasion, my brother said, his murshid was speaking on some philosophical point, and he took out his note-book to make a note of what he had said, and his murshid quickly changed the subject, and my brother at once regretted his action. He felt he had been guilty of a fault in attempting to take one idea, whereas the murshid offered him the whole of his knowledge in the atmosphere and perfume of his personality.

Once sitting talking with his murshid, Inayat

Khan began to remember an appointment he had made with a friend. "And now I must go," said his murshid, to his surprise and embarrassment.

One day a poor messenger came with a message for him from his murshid, and Inayat Khan scarcely knew how to honour the man sufficiently. In the great Indian love-story, the story of Majnun and Laila, it is told how affected Majnun was one day, on seeing the dog of Laila in the street. And so Inayat Khan was affected at the sight of the messenger from his murshid. He stooped and kissed the man's hand, he did not know how to thank him enough, nor did he feel he could do enough for him.

Through the link of sympathy for one person, it is possible to learn something of what sympathy is, and may do. Through a link of this kind one may learn to know of what kind was the link that bound the disciples of Jesus to their Master, and one may begin to learn the meaning of the words, "Be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect." It is this utter loss of self in devotion to the worthy and chosen human guide, that is the beginning of the learning of the utter loss of self in the idea of Divine Perfection. This is the Sufi Teaching.

Myself I never saw Inayat Khan's murshid in life. But twice in vision, I have seen him, and each time, it was at a moment of great difficulty, when the vision came as a help and consolation. Such experiences are beyond the grasp of our comprehension, and show that there is another knowledge, beside

this knowledge collected by our human intelligence. Beyond the names of things and forms, there is still more for us to learn. Very encouraging, exalting, fascinating are these unearthly impressions, which come to us at different crises of our life.

CHAPTER VIII

INAYAT KHAN was twenty-seven when I joined him at Calcutta. He had left Hyderabad a few months before, where he had been under the guidance of his murshid for about three years.

Those days when I lived with him at Calcutta were a busy and successful time for him. He made many journeys, first to Murshidabad, and from there he was called to Dacca by the Prince of Dacca, and also to Silhet in Bengal by the ruler of that part, who offered him a house and full facilities to travel about India if he would make his home there. But he was reluctant to bind himself anywhere, and he always returned to Calcutta and to his classes. And when he came back he was always full of pleasant stories of his adventures, and of his amusing and happy experiences with people of all kinds whom he had met on his various visits.

At Dacca he was invited by the prince to live in the palace. I tell this one story of that time to show something of his nature. He declined the invitation

with many thanks, and then, as he afterwards told me, he was very amused to find, that his refusal had offended his accompanist, the tabla-player.

“But I am a dervish,” said Inayat Khan, trying to appease the offended tabla-player, “think how much better it is to be free and independent, and under obligation to no one.”

“If you are a dervish, then go to the Himalaya and live there, but if you live in this world, you must accept the favours of princes, that is only common sense,” said the tabla-player.

When a second invitation came from the prince, the tabla-player did not wait for my brother's answer, but he began at once to pack his instruments and his possessions into the carriage that had been sent for them, determined that this time there should be no refusal of the gracious invitation.

“Now you see how many points of view there are,” said Inayat Khan, as he told the story. “That luxury-lover and comfort-seeker, he liked going to the palace more than anything else.”

In Calcutta Inayat Khan used to have all kinds of people in his classes. I remember two madzoubs used to come. One of these was a very strange person, who used to wear an European hat with his own muslin clothes. He used very often to announce himself at midnight, when my brother was away, and I used to get up to welcome him. There was no sleep for me on such a night, and early in the morning my guest would call to the man

selling breakfast-cakes in the street, and would buy from him. And then he would offer some to me, to eat, and I did not like accepting from those fingers, but I could not refuse. And then he would kiss me, which I also did not appreciate, and then he would go away. Perhaps we would not see him for days, and then suddenly he would come to another music-class, or perhaps he would present himself again at midnight. I feel now that I learned something from him. He was a poor illiterate man, but to some extent a mystic, and I had been taught by my father to be hospitable and forbearing and serviceable to such people, no matter what might be their manners or ways.

I remember when we were in Calcutta together, Inayat Khan used to sleep on a tiger skin on the floor, and seeing him lying there, I used to feel I could not sleep on my comfortable couch and so I used to lie down on a strip of carpet beside him. He took but little sleep and would spend long hours in the night in prayer and meditation, and I used to try to keep awake to watch him. And I used to think his face changed and became etherealized as he became absorbed in his devotions. But when he noticed that I watched him, then he began to alter the time of the prayer, getting up sometimes a little later or a little earlier in the night.

While I was there his murshid died, and I used to notice after the death of his murshid, how he would often sigh deeply and call to his murshid softly.

He had always been filled with a desire to travel, and after he lost his murshid this desire grew stronger, and became his ambition. For his murshid had enjoined on him as his mission that he should make Sufism known to the Western world, to the best of his ability, and he was continually occupied with this project.

A little incident of this time remains fixed in my mind. One day, we were sitting on the balcony of the house lunching together, and he was talking to me of his desire to go abroad when a painted parrot flew down close beside us. It was a tame parrot, and I jumped up in excitement to catch it. "I will catch it and keep it for the owner," I said. And Inayat Khan watched me as I took a cloth and gradually and carefully came close to the brilliant bird; and eventually, after several tries, I had it. We were both delighted. And we brought the parrot down to the lady of the house, who used to take charge of me when my brother went on his journeys, and we asked her to keep it till the owner should claim it. But we never heard that anyone had lost a parrot, and no one came to take it. And it was just after this that there came an opportunity for Inayat Khan to go to New York and he decided to take the chance fate offered. The whole affair was arranged very suddenly and he telegraphed his intention to our brother, Maheboob Khan, and our cousin, Ali Khan, asking them to go with him, and within a couple of days he was ready himself and

joined them at Baroda, from where they all three set out at once to take ship at Bombay.

Myself was left behind with the lady of the house where we lodged at Calcutta.

“God is in heaven,” Inayat Khan said to her with a deep salutation, “and *thou* art here,” and so he entrusted me to her great kindness for the time being.

And to me he said, “Remember, wherever I may go, there you will come to me too one day. We can never be really parted”—words that I always treasured. He was then twenty-eight, and I was nearly fifteen.

When Inayat Khan had left Baroda, he left Maheboob Khan to fill his place. And so Maheboob Khan had become tutor of music in Baroda to all the families where Inayat Khan had taught previously. He gave lessons to the family of the Maharajah Gaikwar, and to the Prince Sumpatrao and the younger prince, and to the families of the chief justice, Abbas Taiabje, and of the Minister of Education, Jamshadje Dalal, and of the Divan Kershaji. To all these families I have been with my brother Maheboob Khan and to many others besides where he taught in Baroda.

He had also been my father's assistant in the Gayan Shala, the Indian school of music which our grandfather Moula Bax had instituted in Baroda, where the ancient classical art was taught and the ancient music transcribed in the notation devised

by Moula Bax. He had also assisted our uncle, Dr. Pathan, to whom he was very devoted. For after my uncle had returned from London with his musical doctor's degree, Maheboob Khan had become one of his first pupils. And when my uncle became director of the European department of music in Baroda, Maheboob Khan became his right hand.

Maheboob Khan had studied the piano and the violin, and the other European instruments, as a conductor must do, and he became eventually the conductor of the orchestra, and also master of the band. I remember a German professor came to examine the work of the academy, and commended Maheboob Khan for his musical knowledge. And when Lord Minto, the Viceroy, visited Baroda, he sent a special compliment to him.

So when Maheboob Khan received Inayat Khan's telegram from Calcutta he was already established in his profession to which he was devoted, and he was known as a musician of ability and industry. Dr. Pathan, my uncle, who had no son, looked upon him now as his own son, and depended on him at every turn. But greater than anything else was the bond between the two brothers. And Maheboob Khan did not hesitate a moment, but he began to make ready, together with Ali Khan, at once when they received the unexpected telegram to go to New York. It was difficult for them to get their necessary passports and their permits of leave

from the government service so quickly, but through the influence of their uncles, this was accomplished in time. It was difficult for Maheboob Khan also to part with his uncle so abruptly. His future looked so promising, he had made connections early in life and naturally, he was known and recognized by our people; and all this was also part of my uncle's life, who looked on him as a dear son.

Inayat Khan's other companion, our cousin Ali Khan, who also accompanied him to New York, had come to Baroda many years before with his aunts from Tonk, near Jaipur, for the funeral of our grandfather Moula Bax, who was his great-uncle. Ali Khan had lost both his parents as a small child, and his aunts had adopted him and brought him up. He was fifteen, when he came with them to the family reunion at his great-uncle's death. And from that time he remained always with us, for at once, within a few days, he had become closely attached to my two brothers.

He had a beautiful voice and my elder uncle, Murtuza Khan, took him as a pupil, and he was then admitted to the Gayan Shala, the school of Indian music, where he won a scholarship and many prizes. He also went with my brothers to the European School of Music, and he studied, together with them, European instrumental music, and later became a teacher principally in this department, where he drew the interest and approbation of the

English instructors. The Prince Fateh Singhravo heard of Ali Khan, and said that he would like to learn something from him, and so Ali Khan used to give him lessons. I remember they used to play the bag-pipes, an instrument that interested the young prince very much.

Ali Khan helped many a poor student too out of his own salary. It was this helpful quality in him that also came to expression in his work as a healer.

Ali Khan was thus also well-established in Baroda as a teacher of music and as a healer when Inayat Khan asked him to abandon everything and go with him to America. Ali Khan was a good companion to all of us. But chiefly he was the companion of Inayat Khan for they were almost of an age, there being only a few months' difference between them. But after Inayat Khan left home, then Ali Khan became my second brother's constant companion.

"Dost chelo!" Inayat Khan used to say to him—"Friend let us go"—and Ali Khan would get up to follow him without a word, never asking why, nor ever asking where he was going.

One of their first adventures together was just after the death of our grandfather, and it made a lasting impression upon them both. There was a ceremony at the Munder, a large temple at Baroda, at which the new hereditary Guru was to be installed owing to the death of his father, the former Guru or chief priest. Although the new Guru

was just a boy, there nevertheless was an immense gathering. For this occasion, the coronation of the new religious ruler is like the coronation of a king.

Inayat Khan was greatly interested. "Dost chelo!"—"friend let us go!"—he asked Ali Khan, and they both set out together.

There was a splendid procession, after which the Narsijee maharajah, as the new religious leader was called, sat enthroned, and men of all ages, grey-bearded and reverend, made obeisance to this boy, lying flat on their faces on the ground before him in their homage. It is part of our religious training never to make an obeisance of this kind before any man, but what impressed Inayat Khan and his companion more than anything else, was the attitude of the child himself, whose dignity and calm, whose whole bearing was as that of his father. Not only in his manner did this child show the experience and the self-possession of a grown man and of a wise and capable teacher, but his words, his sermons, what he had to say was so dispassionate and elevated and wise. The whole thing was a mystery, and it aroused many trains of thought in them both.

The Mmdir is a richly embellished temple, with countless adherents. And for generations the same kind of life, the same teaching had been followed by the chief Guru. From father to son the same traditions had been handed down, and in the same manner.

CHAPTER IX

I WAS not there to see Inayat Khan and his two devoted companions leave Baroda for America. I returned home from Calcutta only some months later, and I remained at Baroda a year before I myself joined Inayat Khan in New York.

An incident in my life at this time perplexed me greatly. There was a neighbour of ours known to be a difficult-tempered man and much given to gaiety and dissipation. Sometimes he would leave his home for days, and I used to hear someone complaining unhappily through a small opening in the wall of his house whenever I passed there. I listened and heard who this was. It was the wife of our neighbour, quite a young woman, not so many years older than myself, whom I had always known as a child, who told me she found her husband not the right man for her. He was hard-hearted and peculiar, and when he went away from home, he would lock up his house, leaving her alone with her baby and his mother. His mother had no influence over him either, but was most unhappy and suffered equally with the young wife. I used to sympathize with her, and I wondered what I could do to help her. Myself I was just a student, and quite without any sort of power, and I knew that none of the grown-up members of my family would interfere in the matter. For one thing they did not consider

it their affair, and for another thing, they disliked the man himself and did not wish to have any dealing with him in any way.

I was at this time passing through Nimaz, the first stage of self-discipline. But the fact of the unhappy life of this lady whom I knew, made me restless and distracted. At last I thought out a plan. I decided I must explain the whole matter to a friend of her brother, an elderly man, and ask him if he could not interfere and help this poor lady and her mother-in-law and her child. This older man was surprised at my interest and anxiety, seeing that I was but a lad. But to my great gratitude he listened to what I had to say, and gave me a message for the unhappy wife. He told me he would look into the case and arrange for her to return to her own home ; and I came back and gave this news through the little window.

The old friend was as good as his word. He arranged with the landlord to open the door of the house. He had a carriage there ready, and he conveyed the little family to the railway station. And I always remember how the young wife thanked me. " You have done a service," she said, " which is as much as if you had helped a pilgrim on his way to Mecca. My prayers will follow you, I will never forget you, and be sure you will be requited for this some day."

Her thankfulness meant very much to me. And I felt then, and it is a thought that has grown with

me since, that always in life something happens to help the helpless.

My relatives scolded me, my great-great-aunt, the aunt of Moula Bax, whom I called grandmother, was vexed with me. Why had I interfered? What business was it of mine? But I was not troubled by what they said. I felt that it was almost by accident that I had been the cause of helping another.

After my brothers and cousin had been in America some months, there came an invitation for my brother, Maheboob Khan, from the Maharajah of Jamnagar, asking him to become director of musical education in his State. My uncle was overjoyed at this offer, and sent on the good news to New York, but the reply came back from Maheboob Khan that he could not accept the post. I remember my uncle's disappointment. And all the time I was myself missing the companionship of Inayat Khan and longing to be with him. And then one day his telegram came asking me to come to him in New York.

My grandmother, the aunt of Moula Bax, was now about a hundred years of age, her hair still black, and her eyes as bright as a young woman's. She had always been vigorous and capable. In the great famine she had given away all she possessed to help the sufferers. She took an active interest in everything. And she almost refused to allow me to go to America.

"You are only fifteen—such a boy. How can you travel alone so far? Stay here, and in another

ten years, when you are twenty-five, you must marry and settle down and then after that it will be that you may think of travelling abroad. Now you must stay at home, or at least till you are ten years older."

And I asked her : " Grandmother, do you wish to stop me ? Do you really want to prevent me ? " And then she gave me my liberty, and told me I must do as I wished.

But meanwhile life had not been very easy in New York for my brothers and cousin, whom I so longed to join. Their music was not understood. Their art was too foreign for the taste there. They were strangers, and everything took such a long time. After some time, however, opportunities opened and lectures and meetings were arranged. Inayat Khan gave a lecture on Sufism at Columbia University which brought him personal friends. He also made a tour, singing and demonstrating our Indian art and explaining our ideals in Sufism in the different towns he went to.

Then Henry B. Harris met my brother and made a plan for a really beautiful Indian scene and performance, in which we were all to take part. It was thereupon that Inayat Khan, seeing a fair prospect before him, had telegraphed to me that I might come to New York. But although the whole plan was arranged, nothing came of it, for a short time later, after I had already started, Henry B. Harris went down in the wreck of the *Titanic*.

I had many farewells to say before I left home and I remember saying good-bye to Hira. He was a servant of the untouchable or lowest caste, who had been with us ever since I could remember. He was a pariah, a sweeper who came daily to our house. When I was a small child, in order to tease our old concierge or door-keeper, I used to touch Hira, and then the old concierge would call out in his shrill voice, "He has touched him again. Moulamia has touched the sweeper again !"

Since the ladies of the house had some of the Hindu prejudices, I used to be called in at once to wash my hands in a basin of water into which a gold ring had been dropped, a symbolical little ceremony of purification. But soon, when I grew a little older, I refused to do this.

"What does it matter, isn't it all nonsense?" I would ask. And I would touch the sweeper again to tease him too.

"Oh no, sir; no, sir; no, sir—you must not touch me," he would say.

"Why, now tell me why? Why mayn't I touch you?" I would ask.

Hira was a gentle, quiet man, and I had early noticed that there was something rare about him. He had an uncommon way of expressing himself too, and remarks of his would often run in my mind. And one day I asked him: "Hira, do tell me, are you the disciple of someone?"

He looked at me gently smiling and said, "Yes,

I am a follower of Kabirdas. I belong to a society called the Society of Kabirdas."

Kabirdas was the great poet and mystic.

Hira used to tell fortunes and to predict the future. On anxious mornings before going off to school, I remember, I used to run and look for him in the yard or the stable.

"Hira, do tell me, I am just going to school now; how do you think I shall get on to-day?"

He would wait for a moment before answering, and I noticed he would make certain movements with his hand.

"Yes," he might say after a pause, "it will be all right to-day."

Then I would run off quite happily.

I used to watch him sometimes saying his prayers, when he thought he was unobserved, and doing his meditations.

I asked my father about him. "Don't you think there is something mysterious about this man, Abba?"

"Yes, there is something very peaceful about him," my father agreed. "What I see too is that his name has influenced him. Its suggestion has made an impression on him all through his life, so it seems to me," said my father. Hira means a diamond. He was about sixty years old when I left India, and his son Mansok had come to help him in our house.

We had another much valued servant of this class,

my grandfather's favourite coachman and groom, who was also a pariah. Ravat was an old man when I was a boy, and was pensioned, but he used to come back to pay us visits, and our family was very fond of him. My grandfather's secretary was a Brahmin, Khaisarao, and I always heard it told, that whenever our grandfather took his secretary with him, he had to take another driver, because it was not possible for the Brahmin to sit near or touch Ravat, an untouchable of the lowest caste.

This used to interest my family very much, and they used to watch with amusement the precautions that were taken whenever the Secretary went out driving with my grandfather.

My grandfather was very devoted to this secretary, whose son, Sada Nan, was a school-friend of my brother, Inayat Khan. Those two boys once ran away from school, in order to found another better one in another part of India.

Sada Nan died as a young man, and this was a great blow to his father. And as grandfather about this time died too, Khaisarao came to say good-bye to us, for he had decided to become a hermit, an ascetic. We never saw him again, and never knew where he had gone, though sometimes we went to his old address to inquire for him. Such a thing often happens in India. Often a man will give up everything to become a recluse. He will say farewell to his friends, and go away into the woods, or some cave in the hills, where he will live com-

pletely cut off from the world. As a boy this was a thing I could never understand. Why do they feel they want to do that? "Why do they want to go away from everything?" I would ask. It seemed wrong and I would criticize them. But now I can sympathize. "Is the changing life of the world among men so beautiful after all?" I can now ask.

The pariahs or untouchables are as you know as our slum population. They may, perhaps, be compared to the population which provides the poorest labourer in the great European cities, that poorest class whose lives are almost submerged and unknown and remain untouched by the majority of well-to-do classes of their countrymen.

In Baroda many efforts were made to raise their condition, and the Maharajah Gaikwar who at his accession to the throne established compulsory education included the pariahs in the same scheme. On this account some prominent Brahmins resigned their posts, thinking it useless and a waste to give this kind of education to this type of worker. But the Maharajah remained firm, and special buildings were sanctioned for the pariahs under the care of the Minister of Education, Jamshadji Dalal. It is said that this minister, who was a very distinguished man, relegated these particular schools to the charge of an assistant, and one day the Maharajah sent word to him, that he wished to speak with him about them. When Jamshadji Dalal arrived at the palace, he found the King ready to go out with him.

“Let us go to see these new school-buildings,” he said. The minister had never imagined for a moment that he was expected to know about these buildings himself.

“Pardon, your Highness, I must find out first where the schools are.”

“And if you do not even know where the buildings are, I wonder where the boys’ education can be?” the Maharajah is reported to have said. Then they went together and inspected all the arrangements.

The Maharajah took great personal interest in his education scheme. He would often go unofficially and unannounced to visit a class, and he would ask the teacher to go on with the lesson, while he would sit down and listen to it. There was a friend of ours, a Brahmin schoolmaster whom the Maharajah met in this way, and he was so pleased with this young man that he sent for him to come to see him in the palace. T. R. Panday was a poor man, an industrious teacher, and had never dreamed of any such honour, and he went to the interview at the palace, feeling shy and embarrassed. Like the majority of Indians of his class, he was content to receive his wages and remain faithful to his work and his post.

“Would you like to go abroad, to be educated in the Western manner?” was the Maharajah’s question to him. Panday was overjoyed at this opportunity. “But think well before you decide,

Would you be willing to give up many of your Brahmin customs and sacrifice many of your ways and adopt a different way of living? ”

Panday told us that he replied he knew what true Brahminism required of him, meaning he would give up the letter of the Brahmin law, but keep to the true spirit of Brahminism. So the Maharajah sent him to study at Columbia University in New York. And it was Panday who later was the friend who arranged for Inayat Khan to lecture on Sufism in Columbia University, when my brothers and cousin were in New York.

In New York my brother used to sing to Panday, and he loved the music of home so much, that he would not be able to keep back the tears of longing to be at home with his wife and children again. As I have said we are an emotional race. And although he was a Brahmin, he would join us for dinner when Ali Khan prepared our Indian dishes.

Through the kindness of the Maharajah he had some good friends in New York, who treated him almost as if he were a member of their family. One day out swimming with them, he was taken ill in the water, and Mrs. Guest called out to her husband, “Look ! What is happening to him ? ”

And Mr. Guest, seeing the danger he was in rescued him and brought him safely to shore.

T. R. Panday said scarcely a word of thanks. And some days later, when he was with these friends again, Mrs. Guest said, smiling: “We

Americans have a custom that we say 'thank you,' if some one has helped us."

And Panday told us he said : " Madam, I know. And I have been wondering with what words I could thank you and your husband for saving my life. For we Indians have a custom too, and it is of not attempting to say thanks in words for an action which is beyond words to express. On the contrary, we express the thanks with a silence and keep the memory of it in silence as a treasure, thinking perhaps a time may come when we may have an opportunity to prove and show our gratitude. How can I ever thank you for having saved my life ? "

And these kind friends were touched by his words and said they could understand this Indian custom.

On his return to Baroda, T. R. Panday became vice-principal of the Training College, an important post for him. I have often pondered on the incident which brought him to the notice of the Maharajah, and so altered his whole life. For the Sufi says, unlike the scientist, there is nothing that happens by accident.

Perhaps I may speak here of another protégé of our King, Nasr Khan, a pakhavage player, who accompanied famous singers and was also great as a musician himself. His instrument, the pakhavage, is used to accompany the ancient sacred Hindu songs in the style called durpad. I may tell about

him also here, in order to give another illustration of the character of the Gaikwar. For his Highness heard him play at the palace of the Nawab of Rampur and was so pleased by his music, that when he returned to Baroda, he asked the Nawab if this musician might be permitted to come to his Court. The Nawab graciously agreed, and Nasr Khan became for many years my grandfather's accompanist at durbar and one of his best friends.

He was a very handsome man, tall and straight and with grey eyes. I used to listen to him often when I was a boy. He lived for his art. He had few requirements and since he had no family or dependents, he used to give away most of his salary to help young students.

One evening he went with a pupil to play to the Maharajah Gaikwar at one of his country palaces, a little out of town, the Makarpura Palace. After the performance Nasr Khan found there was no carriage to take them home, so he started out on foot, his pupil carrying his instrument for him. It happened that the King had come with an aide-de-camp into the garden, to walk there in the cool of the evening, and catching sight of Nasr Khan, he stopped and asked him: "What is this? Ustad (master) is there no arrangement made for you to drive home?"

Nasr Khan was touched at the Maharajah's instant notice and thoughtfulness and consideration. And later he was surprised to find that an additional

grant had been allowed him, so that he might keep a horse and carriage for his own use.

"I will have my funeral feast before I die," he used to say, and he would share almost everything he had with his young students. He used to be specially interested in encouraging them to learn wrestling. Nasr Khan felt the death of my grandfather very deeply. "There is no one I care to play for now," he used to say, "my art is now widowed." He died just before my father died.

And here is another story of our Maharajah, the Gaikwar. There is an ancient custom that if a criminal is condemned to be hanged, and is on his way to the gallows and the King passes by, then the prisoner is pardoned. It happened when I was a boy, that a condemned man, wearing his garland of flowers—for a man under sentence of death receives a garland of flowers and is also granted a last request—was being driven past in the prison-cart, when the Maharajah came driving by. The man bowed to him and the Maharajah returned the salutation. But when the Maharajah learned who it was, wearing flowers, who had greeted him, and this ancient custom of royal pardon was also brought to his notice, he enquired into all the details of the case. Then, finding that the prisoner was guilty of a very serious offence, the Maharajah respected the old custom by altering the death-sentence to a term of imprisonment, but said at the same time that he

could not permit the author of such a crime to be set entirely free.

I tell this incident as an illustration of the moderation with which changes were introduced in our state. The old customs were not ignored by the Maharajah, they were modified. We felt that our State was progressive, that men of ability of all kinds were recognized, such as the teacher T. R. Panday and the musician Nasr Khan, that educational reforms were being constantly made, and that our ruler was interested in helping and encouraging talent of every kind.

The background to my youthful memories is the beauty of the Court. I remember particularly one evening I was taken there with my cousin Baboo Khan. The moon was shining brightly, but there were also bright lights under the trees where the Maharajah was seated, dressed in the finest white, in muslin from Dacca, with diamonds flashing from the orders on his breast.

I remember how the prince, Fateh Singh Rao, came in to take his place, looking so brave and handsome, and how gracefully he bowed to his father, the Maharajah, who returned the greeting with beautiful courtesy. The prince charmed us all. He was so intelligent and alert; at once his mind would be just there, on the spot. We felt he was a prince for us all, and not only for a few courtiers. I had a special admiration for him and so had my father.

That evening several singers of the older school came forward, and according to the older custom, as each of them finished his song, he gave an explanation of it, telling the origin of the raga and the history of the particular style and the motive of the composition. The King listened attentively, though sometimes these explanations seemed overlong. But younger singers were not permitted to indulge in this old custom; they sang their songs and passed on. I found it all beautiful, the jewels, the colours, the music, and above all the grace of manner I saw there. And then the Maharajah's eye fell upon us.

"Who are the children?" he asked, looking kindly.

"The nephews of the director of music," was the answer. This was the climax of the evening for me. That the Maharajah should have noticed us, seemed the brightest moment of my life. Thus still the memories remain of the lovely glimpses I had as a child of the Court of Baroda.

A short time ago in Belgium, in a small town I was out walking, and saw an angelic little child walking alone, carrying a school-slate. A band was playing in the caserne as we passed, and a flag was flying above it.

"Now can you tell me," I asked the little boy, "why this band is playing? And why the flag is there?"

He stopped and looked at me and took a deep

breath. "Parceque . . ." he said, "parceque . . . another King is coming to visit our country."

I was so struck by his way of answering. So small a nation as Belgium is, how conscious she yet is of her existence in this world I thought.

I gave him a little present to buy himself something sweet. I was thinking among our country-people there is no feeling of that kind. The country-people hardly know who is ruling. Our education moves so slowly that there is no way for our people to understand their own affairs unless they go abroad.

CHAPTER X

IN Baroda we felt our Maharajah was practical and anxious to introduce reforms. He was accessible to his people and could be easily approached. I heard much of the Nizam of Hyderabad and of the Court there, but only through the descriptions Inayat Khan gave me. And since this great mystic had so great an influence upon him, I may recount here something of what my brother told me of the Nizam's Court. There all was very different from the Court at Baroda. The Court of the Nizam gave a glimpse of the old type of Indian monarchy. He himself moved almost like a mythical figure, the centre and the sun of scenes of magnificence.

His acts were the acts of a hero of romance. For instance, he discovered a plot to dethrone him: the

offenders were exiled, but at the same time by the Nizam's wish, they were given a handsome allowance, so that even in exile they might still feel his munificence.

He was so surrounded by courtiers, that he was almost unapproachable. It was said that a "wrestler would become thin as a mosquito" while a man waited for a decision, or for hearing of his petition. On one occasion when Inayat Khan was in Hyderabad, there was a State ceremony, and foreigners came from all parts to see it. It should have started at five o'clock in the afternoon, and everyone was assembled there at the time. After waiting some hours, the Europeans, who have not our patience, went away feeling annoyed and disappointed. The procession eventually started at ten o'clock at night, but all grudge and annoyance was forgotten by those who saw the procession pass, with the Nizam seated on his elephant.

"Something extraordinary, something extraordinary," was the comment my brother heard on all sides from the strangers who were there.

I have said the Nizam was a poet and a mystic. His pen-name was Asif. In the poems of Asif and of Dagħ his friends, the "lover of life", that is to say the mystic, is pictured as a mad man laughed at by the conventional crowd. He is spoken of as a man who finds no resting-place in this changing caravanserai, this House of Mirrors, this scene of fleeting lights and shadows, this world. For the

mystic, the lover of life, is one who is ceaselessly pressing forward on the high adventure. Continually these poems reflect the thought that learning and cleverness is as dust blowing from the desert compared to the pure love of life, to the emotion of the heart, and the divine longings of man.

When shall the mocking world withhold its blame,
When shall men cease to darken thus my name,
Calling the love, which is my pride, my shame ?

sings Asif.

The joy of love, no heart can feel alone,
The fire of love, at first unseen, unknown,
In flames of love, from either side is blown.

O Judge, let me my condemnation see !
Whose names are written on my death-decree ?
- The names of all who have been dear to me.

What hope to reach the Well-Beloved's door,
The dear lost dwelling that I knew before,
I stumbled once, can I return no more ?

O Asif, tread thy pathway carefully,
Across this difficult world. For, canst thou see ?
A farther journey is awaiting thee.

Asif, the mystical ruler, sang in his poems of his connection with the Well-Beloved, his Creator. He sang of the divine source of his joy as being also the goal of his desire.

The Nizam, who was both the pupil and the friend of Dagh, bestowed on this poet the title Fasih-ul-Mulk, which means "eloquence of the nation".

Dagh was a man of great learning, famous for the charm and brilliance of his conversation. He was the brilliant centre of the Mushaira, the tournament of poets, at which the poets used to meet to recite their verses, and also to cap each other's extempore lines. For there was a large circle of literary men at Hyderabad, and Dagħ was known as the wittiest of them all. The Maharajah Gaikwar was also a patron of literature and the arts.

By the side of Dagħ, there now lies buried at Hyderabad, Amir Minai of Rampur, who was his rival, and who had also travelled to the Court of the Nizam because of its fame as a centre of poets. Amir Minai was also a Sufi mystic.

O longing, seeking eyes,
He comes to you in many a varied guise.
If Him you cannot find,
The shame be yours, O eyes that are so blind.

Thus sings Amir Minai of the Well-Beloved, the Creator. .

O drink the Wine of Love,
And in the assembly of the Enlightened move.
Let not the darkness dim,
Fall like a curtain, 'twixt thy soul and Him.

Crazy art thou, Amir,
To wait before His gate in hope and fear.
For never in thy pain
Shall He yield up thy ravished heart again.

These Sufi poets sing of the pain of life and of its beauty. They sing of their sorrow and disappointments and sufferings, but also of their ever-present

hope of a gradual ascent to a higher and a divine view of existence.

And if the Keeper of the Garden close
Before your face the inexorable gate,
Oh, linger yet—the perfume of the rose
May float to you, and find you, as you wait,
Not all disconsolate.

So does a Sufi poetess express this hope.

It was just before I left home to join my brothers and cousin in New York, that I heard the news of Nizam's death, a great sorrow to us, for we knew how deeply Inayat Khan would feel the loss of one whom he had come to love so much, and perhaps to admire more than any man he knew of on earth. And no account of Inayat Khan can I think omit mention of his admiration for the Nizam and certain aspects of his Court, which had so great an influence upon my brother's life and views. Nor should I forget to speak of that other side of the mystical character of the Nizam, and of his power as a healer. For among the healers known at that time in India, His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad was able to cure snake-bites, and for this he was known over all India. It was not necessary for him to see the patient and he never refused a case that applied to him. He knew every symptom of this poisoning, which he cured through his mystical power.

As a boy I was myself once badly bitten by a scorpion in my foot. It was one evening, I remember, after dinner, I went on to the balcony of our

house and I did not see the scorpion, and I must have trodden on it. It was Inayat Khan who almost carried me to a healer, a carpenter, who cured me of that burning pain immediately. The pain was like a fire which ran up my leg.

Knowing from experience what the suffering from such a bite means, I had great sympathy one day, some four or five years later, with a woman who brought her daughter to our house to see our cousin. The daughter had been bitten in the hand by a scorpion. Ali Khan was lunching when she came and I went out with him into the hall of the house, and saw him cure the girl. He asked her where the pain was in her arm, and where the bite was, and "now touch here, now touch there," he said, telling her to touch her own injured arm, and he sent her away perfectly cured in, I remember, two or three minutes.

Through sympathy, acquired through absolute purity of motive, through Fana-fi-sheik, the healer participates in the physical symptoms of his patients. And his pure will reinforces the will of the patient. The Sufi says pain is mental, illness is mental. The impression of pain must be first removed from the mind. The will and mind of the healer becomes one force, which invokes the divinity within the patient to assert itself over the body and throw off the impression on the mind. This freedom from the pain is also brought about by the effect made by the healer on the unconscious self of the patient.

Healers have different methods in practice. Some in the East recognize the value of rhythm in certain cases, and through the rhythm of music or rhythmical sound they will catch the patient up into such a condition that he will relate all that is sealed in his mind, and so disclose the seed of his malady. He will relate in this state truths of which he has no conscious knowledge in his normal state.

It seems often to us of the East as if the treatment given to a patient in the West is too mechanical, because the external physical condition is treated, which is the effect, not the cause of the malady, and so the real reason of the illness is not touched. Often also, for instance, in a mental case, the complaint of that poor thing, not being thoroughly known, he is sent to an asylum. Also the rapidity of modern life is such, that sometimes even when the root of the illness is recognized as psychological and it is known that patience and sympathy will heal the mental illness, there is no one found who can sacrifice himself to the patient to that extent. Such is the arrangement of modern life. If we have more illness in India than in the West, this is due to inferior hygienic conditions.

In the East Jesus Christ is the model of the healer. The life of Jesus is principally known and venerated in the East for that reason. The power of Jesus is besought, and the name of Jesus is invoked by the healer. There is possibly a greater veneration shown, and a greater devoutness felt towards Jesus

Christ by many in Islam, than could be found among the Christian people.

Famous in Baroda was Bhiyaji Ustad, a wrestler and a great teacher of wrestling. He was also a healer. He was quite famous, for instance, for healing hay-fever. Bhiyaji Ustad accepted our cousin as one of his pupils, and later gave him permission to practice as a healer in Baroda. There is never any grant given to a healer, or Bakshishnama, or license. Healing in the East is considered an inborn, instinctive gift, which is developed in practice, but its development depends on the nature of a man's character and life. Thus it is a gift that may lose its virtue, in spite of any accumulation of knowledge through the years, if the life and character of the healer becomes changed.

CHAPTER XI

ON the evening of my departure from home to join Inayat Khan in New York, I came before my grandmother, as the head of the household, to ask her permission to go. I touched her feet and bowed low before her, but she caught me in her hands and kissed me, tears in her eyes. Though she was old and weak, she was firm in will and clear in thought, and there was something fresh and healthy in her. She had outlived her husband and her adopted son and nephew, my grandfather Moula Bax; she had

seen both my mother and my father die, and she looked upon my brothers and myself as her own children.

"Even the youngest is taken from me," she said weeping. "Inayat takes them away—all four are gone. This is a real parting, for I shall not see this one again."

"You may not say that grandmother," said my uncle, who was standing beside me, "you may only wish him good fortune. This is a joyful occasion. And your children will come back to you. Even if the four youngest are gone for a time, are we not still here? On our shoulders you are lifted."

My uncle made a little speech, I remember, as he stood beside me, but my grandmother still wept bitterly. My niece, the only child of my sister, who had recently died, took my sister's place, and bound a gold coin on my right arm for good luck, and put a beautiful necklace of flowers round my neck. Then the Scriptures were opened before me, and the leaves turned over, and moved through the air, as if to sanctify the air I breathed at parting. After these superstitious little customs were done, I went away, the men of the family going with me to the station. There we found friends assembled to bid me good-bye. Girder Lal had come. He was the Brahmin headmaster from the Navasari Prant province of the Gaikwar's kingdom. He had been a pupil of my grandfather, Moula Bax, whom he

revered as Guru. On the Sumbarum, my grandfather's festival day, he would prostrate himself in homage before his portrait, believing, as I have said the Brahmins did, in accordance with their creed, that my grandfather was the reincarnation of a great Hindu genius, Tayagarajah.

"Now you are going into the world, keep in mind that great man, your grandfather. Remember his services to his country. Do not either forget his Brahmin pupils in this poor land, who are doing their duty faithfully as he did," he said to me, and he gave me a present of coco-nut, which he had brought me according to the Brahmin custom, and also flowers and fruits. There were other Brahmins there also, all with presents for me. I was so conscious of the warmth of their feeling, and the kindness of their interest and their affection wrapping about me.

"You will be so unhappy. You will be disappointed. You will never feel at home. You will not be nicely regarded," had been the remarks of my friends when they heard I was leaving for the West. But at the moment of my going, there were only good wishes and presents. I was so excited and happy.

Girdar Lal knew the English language thoroughly and he helped at the station in getting the tickets, and seeing about my veena and my baggage, although most of the travelling arrangements had already been made by Thomas Cook. I had been

learning English, but had as yet hardly any practice or opportunity of speaking it. At school my languages had been Hindustani and Gujerati, also Sanscrit and a certain amount of Arabic and Persian. English we studied in the last year.

My uncle and my cousin, and Shabas Khan, the son of that attendant of my mother, of whom I have said he was first keeper of our books and then later my tutor in music—these three travelled with me that night to Bombay, where the ship was due to leave next afternoon. When at last I arrived on board, my unhappiness became such that I felt I could not really go after all, but I had no words to express this. My uncle was unhappy too to see me go and suddenly he left me, taking my companions away with him, feeling, I suppose, that there was now nothing to be said. I stood at the side of the ship looking in the direction they had gone. In a moment the pleasure of all my preparation had disappeared.

On the deck were the great baskets of fruit, the lemons and oranges and nuts that had been given to me. I did not yet know about sea-sickness and how useful I should find these on the voyage. Round my neck hung my beautiful necklace of flowers. My companions had left me so quickly and I had come on board too early. The steamer was still there at anchor, and I was still standing in that one spot, when I felt a tap on my shoulder. An Indian gentleman, Colonel Pershad, had noticed

my depression and had come to me to tell me not to be unhappy. He knew my grandfather, Moula Bax, by name. He found that my cabin was not far from his, and he told me to come to him in any need or difficulty. And so even before the start I found I had a friend on board.

I heard a gun fired. I asked what this meant and I was told it was the signal for departure. This was my first quite new impression, and I felt that now I was really off on my new life.

The stewards admired my beautiful necklace, and they hung it up in the dining-room for a decoration there. It was very carefully and beautifully made of pink roses and white flowers tied with knotted silver-thread and a more beautiful rose hanging in front as a pendant. The stewards also took my baskets of fruit and nuts, for these were too large to place in my cabin. The Brahmins offer coco-nuts for luck, for the white substance of the coco-nut is oily, and it is offered with the same meaning as the ancient anointing with oil was done. This ancient custom signifies the good wish for prosperity, since oil takes away roughness and makes smooth, and also makes supple and gives strength, and thus oil typifies the qualities necessary for happiness and smooth life.

Boys are, perhaps, naturally sensitive and self-conscious. I felt so uncomfortable on that journey, with strangers of a foreign race all around me. I did my best to observe and to fall in with their

customs, and this made me still more nervous, and self-conscious and unnatural. I was wearing new and unaccustomed clothes, and I could not feel in them as boys who have put on such things all their lives, and young people are also very sensitive about clothes and appearance. Once I put on my white coat and trousers, to which I was accustomed at home, but some ladies sent word that this was not a suitable dress for me to wear.

I was very ill, and we had a bad storm in the Mediterranean Sea. I should have liked to remain in my cabin, but the kind Colonel Pershad used to come to tell me I must not give in like this, but I must come out and go up on the deck and walk about. In the dining-room I found nothing appealing to me to eat. No taste, no taste in anything, and pictures would come before me of my family at home enjoying their good cooking. Cold or roast meat is difficult and seems tasteless and almost repellent, and boiled vegetables also the same. Now I understand that this food is suitable and right for colder climates, and that it is our more intense climate which makes us smaller eaters and more inclined to have seasoned and spiced dishes, and deliciously flavoured and perfumed sweetmeats and fruit. The steward tried to tempt me, and macaroni and tomato sauce he brought me. He was an Italian. But it seemed to me most untempting. Then he brought me eggs prepared with butter and this at last I could eat. As a boy it was a shock and a loss

to me, to be hungry and not to find anything I could take.

If older people spoke to me, I kept my eyes lowered, as I had been taught a boy should. I looked down and not straight into the faces of the ladies and older men. It was when I arrived in New York that Inayat Khan instructed me to look up, into the faces of those who spoke to me and told me that this was not considered an impertinence in the West. He also told me, I remember, that I must wait when spoken to, to see if a lady or anyone offered me a hand, and then, if so, I must offer mine too, to shake hands. At home we would never shake hands with the ladies, we would simply bow to them. He also told me, that if anyone said, "I am glad to meet you," I must also reply something. I must say, "And I am happy to see you." In India we would keep quiet and bow, if some one made some such remark at meeting.

Though I kept my eyes on the ground, and felt confused and embarrassed if ladies questioned me, answering often "yes" when I would have preferred to say "no", and "no" where I would rather have said "yes", and afterwards remembering, and thinking over my mistakes, becoming even more self-conscious, still I was pleased by every little kindness and attention shown to me. Perhaps it is that all boys are sensitive in such things. One lady noticed that I had torn the sleeve of my coat, and she mended it for me. Another sent medicine to my

cabin, when she heard how ill I had been. I was so touched by these incidents and I treasured up these things.

I admired the captain on his bridge, on the lookout, and he used to bow to me and say "Buon giorno". I admired the uniforms of the officers. At Port Said Colonel Pershad took me to the Mosque and I had cake and coffee. There was some political trouble at Tripoli and going through the Red Sea, there was very little light at night, none from the lighthouses or lightships, and I loved to see the light made by our own boat for our own travelling. This was most beautiful. Also the signalling of ships passing each other interested me greatly. The scenery approaching Gibraltar and coming towards Naples is admirable. And I noticed the sensation that went through the ship, when, after some days at sea, land was sighted, and I joined in this feeling, as I saw mountains and land in the distance again.

It was before we came to Naples that I saw in a dream a funeral procession; and waking up I believed it was my grandmother who had died. I told Colonel Pershad, who thought it must be so, and he encouraged me and consoled me as best he could. "She had reached a wonderful age. Her life had ended, yours is only beginning," he said. "Be happy in order to please her, and try to live so that it would please her."

But I felt sad at the thought that I should not see her again. I thought what a friend she had been, all

my life. She used to threaten to tell my father if I did anything wrong, but I was always confident that she would never do such a thing. She scolded me, but never wanted to see me punished, even when I used as a small boy to train my pet goat to-walk into the house and upstairs, which was my ambition to see for a long time, and which all the ladies in the house disliked so much. Through all the changes in the family my grandmother had remained always the same. After I landed in New York, I told my brothers of my dream, and they said, "It is so." They had already had the news of my grandmother's death by telegram.

At Naples I changed steamers, and so I felt here I had to begin all over again. I remember at landing, Thomas Cook took my baggage and gave me directions how I should find my way to the Hamburg-Amerika liner, on which I was to go to New York. I was standing there, on the landing-stage, with my veena in my hand, wondering if with my little English I had really understood the directions that had been said, when Colonel Pershad came up, and called to the man who had taken my baggage to come back, and he himself brought me safely to my new ship.

At Naples I enjoyed going up in the wonderful little railway, in jerks, to see the panorama from above on the hill. And when I got on board, the steamer was taking in a cargo of macaroni, so much, so much macaroni. And this I watched.

So huge was the steamer, it became a great surprise to me to see how small she seemed when we were out at sea, going high and then down low again on the waves, like a small thing. The window in my cabin porthole was broken by a wave, and mended again, and I wondered at the great thickness of glass that was used. There was a good orchestra on this steamer, which I enjoyed. The European musical instruments had always been a great interest and study to us at home. It was the method of the voice production which seemed to us strange and unmusical when we first listened to singing in the West. We heard, for example, one famous concert singer, a lady, whose voice pleased her audience so much, but to us it was like the sound from some great tube or pipe, and it seemed unnatural that it should give pleasure, especially coming from a lady.

On this steamer also I found a kind friend, a Canadian gentleman who could speak Hindustani and was returning to Canada from India, where he had been present at the ceremonies for the coronation of King George.

On board ship I had my first glimpse of Western customs and the strangeness of Western manners made me wonder very much. Many manners which I saw for the first time shocked me and I scarcely knew where to look. Although I know something about dancing, it is even yet almost impossible for me to see couples dancing together, and at that

young age it seemed shocking to me. I cannot perceive anything beautiful in such dancing, besides the uncomfortable sensation it gives me. Even now, after so many years in Western countries, I find it difficult to endure most cinema performances. The human being naturally turns towards beauty, and when certain ideals of what is suitable and beautiful have been early impressed on the mind, it is difficult to ignore these standards.

I have noticed this kind of sensitiveness also in Western people if they have natural sensitiveness and have also had a strict discipline as children. They have the same difficulty of going against their early training in good manners. It is as if the ideas of good manners, which one learns to respect as a child, become part of one's self, so that one identifies oneself with them, and feels oneself guilty if they are disrespected in one's presence. This clearly shows that few customs are in themselves right or beautiful, but that our ideas concerning such things depend on what we have learned in childhood or read in our books. It is the motive behind action that has importance.

My father, for instance, would have thought it unbearable to hear a lady or young girl make loud laughter—"Ha, ha, ha!" In India, no doubt, the extreme takes an opposite direction. Nevertheless modesty is innate in the human being, it seems to be part also of animal life and plant life, and everywhere one sees in creation, that beauty is veiled.

Many public customs and manifestations in the West make me still feel uncomfortable, for their tastelessness from our Eastern point of view. There is to me, for instance, something awful about public monuments and sculpture in the parks and squares, and I do not care to look at these. I realize that statues represent a certain idea of art, and as my own idea of art develops, I am more able to understand them. In certain kinds of Hindu temples and museums, you may also see such things. In India our national dress is simple and natural, in the manner in which it clothes the body. And by the banks of rivers in our hot seasons, you may see the people freely bathing. But the Western statues are too much; they exaggerate and they are too emphatic. They are like descriptions that finish off beauty.

For instance, you may hear some one praising a town to which you are going, in exaggerated terms. "Have you seen Nice?" they say, "How beautiful it is! It is too beautiful for words," and so on, and when you arrive at that place, you are bewildered. The praise you have heard of that place has been too much. The descriptions have finished the beauty for you. It is the same for me with Western sculpture. In art all should not be said at once. There should be something veiled and covered, something left for the mind to complete. So also as a boy seeing for the first time the Western manners, I found many things contrary to our code.

When we arrived in New York the captain of the Hamburg-Amerika liner would not permit me to land until he found out if some one had come to meet me, and he telephoned to the address I gave him in New York to inquire about this for me. This kindness, this sense of responsibility on his part I appreciated then and since. I remember a stewardess came to guide me to the place where my brothers and cousin were waiting for me, another piece of kindness I did not forget.

As I approached Inayat Khan, even there in that public place, I fell at his feet in our Eastern salutation, forgetting all else, and he raised me and kissed me on my forehead. Seeing him again, all my unpleasant experiences and uncomfortable sensations were forgotten, and answering him, I said "No," the storm of which they had heard had not been too rough, and "yes," everyone had helped me on my way with kindness.

But it was February, and next day, when I felt the piercing winter-wind and cold, I thought I could never endure it, and that I must go home at once. Our cousin walked through the streets with me, showing me new things and wonders on every side, but there was too much movement. I was bewildered. Even the lights at nights were turning and twisting and flashing. There was nothing to connect myself with in all that I saw, and the cold blotted out every beauty.

CHAPTER XII

THE contrast between my life at home and my new life seemed to me as a boy almost intolerable, hardly to be endured. I remember one piercing cold day of that first February in New York, walking with Inayat Khan to the great Library, and he asked me, "How do you feel?" And I said, "I hope, inside the Library, I shall feel the warmth of India."

And he said, "Did I not tell you, when I wrote to you, that if you came to the West, you must be brave? Did I not tell you, you must prepare to be as brave as our father's father, Bahadur Khan?"

Bahadur Khan, our grandfather, was a giant man, well known among his people for his strength and his courage. Once in a solitary place, he came upon the caravan of a Hindu lady, which had been attacked by thieves, her servants having joined with them. And alone Bahadur Khan put them to flight and rescued her, accompanying her to her destination, giving up all his own business and plans till he had personally brought her into security. Many other such stories of his bravery and strength were told of him.

And, indeed, it seemed to me that I needed all the courage of all my ancestors to pass through those early days in New York. Everything was hard to bear, though little bits of kindness there were, which I remember. One lady offered to help me with my

English, and I brought her my books, and once when I was very unhappy she kissed me as if I were her son. Another lady gave me a cap to wear. Also I remember the beauty and the gentleness of Miss Ruth St. Denis, to whom Inayat Khan explained many of our Eastern dances.

In our apartments in the Bronx I remember being interested to see that if ever we asked the owner anything, he referred us to his wife, the landlady. "You must ask Mrs. Collins. She will attend to it." I was interested because it is so in the Orient too. The mistress of the house will arrange everything in the house too. Thus, gradually observing such details, though the manner of the man in speaking of his wife was so different to that of an Indian, I began to find resemblances to the ideas at home.

The great Western shops interested me very much, and specially the independence of the lives of the women serving in them, earning their own living, and dwelling independently in boarding-houses and lodgings. This independence and freedom of life we admired. Though never have I had cause to consider that the life of woman is happier in the West than in the East. There is much criticism of the Eastern customs; but behind the screen in the West are sufferings and miseries unknown in our land.

But chiefly I was conscious of the contrast of my life compared with my life at home. I remembered how as a schoolboy at home I would awake at dawn

to hear in that clear air the voices of the Brahmins going down to the river to bathe, chanting as they went their beautiful verses from the Veda, which is their holy scripture. And I would also hear the Muslim fakirs calling to the world to arise and to take up its burden. Their call was expressed in lines of poetry, such as those of Omar Khayyam, now so well known in the West :

Awake ! for Morning in the Bowl of Night,
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight.

Setting out to school, I would see the Brahmins returning from their bath, and the women carrying jars of water to their houses, as I followed a sadhu who played on his sweet-stringed sitar and sang as he went his way, which was the same way as mine. Every morning he sang the same lovely song, and its meaning was the meaning of the beautiful Christian story, known in the West, of the wise and the foolish maidens. "Awake ! maiden," he sang, "Arise and adorn yourself for the Beloved is at hand. Arise so that your Lover may find you beautiful. Look in your mirror maiden, what does it tell you ? Prepare, be ready I say for the Bridegroom is on his way. The Beloved approaches."

As he passed, women and girls would come out to watch and to listen to him silently a moment, and to scatter flowers at his feet, He was a strange man. His black hair hung down almost to his knees, round his neck were many rows of coloured beads,

and upon his head and clothing were dust and ashes, a reminder that our bodies are a stuff that must end in dust. By the nobility of his look, by the sweetness of his music, by the simplicity and gentleness of his manner, such an eccentric being may suggest a height of nobility and beauty, that an orthodox priest cannot give. On every nation orthodoxy may weigh a burden and obstacle. This Jesus Christ has pointed out. In the song of this man, as I followed him day by day, in the memory of those early mornings, there is a raga and a clearness, a calm, a purity of light and air which seems to me to contain within it the ideal of beauty that was forever placed before us children.

Our school ended in the hot season at eleven o'clock, but even in the hottest season the work of the people continues through the day, except for certain hours of midday rest and siesta, which are necessary in that intense heat. For the people of our land are not lazy, though the rhythm of their lives is different from the rhythm of lives that are controlled by metal machinery. Such slightly-built people as they are, with so little flesh on their bodies, one wonders how our labouring people can show themselves capable of so much endurance and sense of duty, lifting heavy burdens with such skill, even at times of the day when the gigantic elephant refuses to move from the shade. Busy also are the lives of our thinkers and scholars and writers, who sit in the shadow of the trees at their work ;

who, before taking pen in hand, find a few moments in which to dedicate themselves to their task with pious meditation, and holy invocation of the muses and gods of inspiration. The life of artists and thinkers in India cannot be judged from the outside. It must also be lived to be understood. In the old days the musician, for instance, in India had an opportunity to lead an entirely musical life. His actual needs were small and things were so arranged by his state or his patron that he need not be anxious every day of his life for the bare means of existence. And at the end of his life, the pension from state or patron would be enough, he knew, to allow him to end his days in peace. The dedication of life to an art may be such that a man merges into his music, into his art.

CHAPTER XIII

My brother's mission in life, entrusted to him by his murshid, was to make Sufism known to the Western nations, and for this reason we were constantly travelling. But although my brother undertook his mission by the wish of his murshid, he had shown an aptitude from childhood. His poems from his earliest years are filled with a deep faith and wonder. When he was twelve he made a poem to my mother. How could he ever thank her enough, his mother? This was the theme, and it touched and surprised



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her so much, both for its beauty and subtlety and for the sweetness and gratitude of its affection. As a child he was always happy and grateful. He was gladness itself. This was the rhythm of his life as it started. But he was forbidden the writing of poems by my father.

As I have said at nineteen he had made his successful turn in India. I remember my father began then to feel that he must let his son choose his own career. My father, hearing my brother's poems at that time, asked my uncle, "But tell me now what do you think? Do they not seem to you good?" And my uncle answered, "I think you must now recognize a gift." Inayat Khan had then already made his name as a singer in India.

One of the poems he composed at that time was in praise of ideal maidenhood. The poet calls up the beauty of the world and shows it growing pale as the maiden advances in her gentleness. The proud peacock, he says, feels that his spreading tail is not so bright, and feels shy as she passes. The deer, looking at her, sees that his own eyes are less beautiful than he had thought, and he too feels shy as she passes. The lion, looking at her forehead, feels less proud of his own mighty brow. The elephant, watching the gentle dignity of her walk, feels less royal. The snake, looking at her curling hair, forgets to make its own perfect coil. While the music of the spheres catches up and re-echoes the soft sounds of her golden anklets.

In another poem of that time he speaks also of the beauty he sees in life. He speaks of a charm that is forever showing itself, and forever escaping him, lurking everywhere and yet never grasped or held. In the smile of happiness sometimes, sometimes in the glance of sorrow, sometimes in the humility of a servant, sometimes in the pride of a Shah, in the dependence of a child, in the love of a mother, in the friendship of a friend, in the hatred of an enemy, he sees something for ever playing hide-and-seek with him. What is this beauty that is so elusive, and that crowns and exalts the thing it touches? It is the Holiness of the Holy One he says. It lives in the soul of music, it draws one to itself. And it is this, he says, that makes the song of Inayat.

This youthful perception of beauty is also the inspiration of the man. It seemed to Inayat Khan, the philosopher, that in the brightness and light in a jewel, in the beautiful face of a flower, in the strength and outline of a mountain, that wherever he looked he saw always one aspiration seeking to clothe and express itself—an aspiration which at last finds its perfect expression in humane man.

It was his constant realization that the further one explores self, the more clearly the reason of religion is understood. For the belief of the Sufi is not an outer belief, it is not a belief in a Deity he has never seen. His pursuit is a logical one and he finds the explanation of religion by an investigation into the self. What do you represent by your white garb,

he asks of the water-lily in a poem? And it replies, "the purity at the heart of this lake." (Gayan.)

There is a story told of Kabir, the Sufi and weaver, that at his death both Muslims and Hindus claimed the corpse. The Muslims said, "He belongs to us," and the Hindus said, "He belongs to us." And in the dispute his body disappeared. This story is told by the Sufi to show that in spite of religious forms, which are the outer body, the essential philosophy of all religion is the same. The unity of religious ideals, this was the subject of my brother's study.

In the carrying out of his mission we travelled with him through America and many countries of Europe. We went to Russia and to England and to France.

I remember one incident in Russia which I may tell here. It was before the War, and one day I accompanied Inayat Khan to the house of an English gentleman, an Orientalist, who had specially studied the language and history of Persia. There had come to his house some Russian Tartar priests from near Moscow, who wished to question my brother about Sufism, and the Englishman was kindly acting as interpreter.

"But Sufism belongs to the teaching of Islam," said the Russian priests, and from this point they could not go.

"We believe that Sufism has existed in all periods of history," said my brother, "the Prophet

Mohamet recognized the Sufis, and called them the *knights of purity*. We believe, however, that Sufism did not begin then. There are some who say that the Sufi point of view originated in the Jewish sect of the Essenes. Others trace the origin of this point of view in the ancient Egyptian religion." And then Inayat Khan tried to express and to explain what Sufism actually means.

The English scholar was a nervous and eccentric man and kept repeating in a low voice and quickly and without reason it seemed—"Shuma, shuma, shuma." This is a Persian word and means *you*. This made me begin to giggle. I was only a boy, and looking at these people my giggling fit went on. My brother became uncomfortable, and gave me a look to stop me. But there was no end to my giggling, and the Englishman went on nervously saying, "Shuma."

It seemed so strange to me to see my brother discussing his broad-minded views with such fanatical religious persons.

"Be ashamed of yourself," at last my brother said softly to me in Hindustani. And for days after I remember I was very ashamed.

It was impossible for Inayat Khan to be angry, or to say anything angry. He saw each person in relation to the surroundings in which that person belonged, and in connection with that person's own individual life and capacity. "It is only natural," he would say when he commented on the manners

of those who happened to cross our path, as we wandered through so many different places, meeting such different types of people.

In Paris, I remember, on our first visit there, we made the acquaintance of a good and pious lady whom we used to call mother, for she was most friendly and kind to us. She became interested in us, and asked me questions about Sufism. She was herself a Roman Catholic, and she asked me if I had ever heard of Jesus Christ? Now since my earliest days, since I was a small child, I had heard of the Blessed Jesus, whom I had been taught to call "the breath of God." Can one express a greater reverence than this, or give a higher name?

She was pleased when I told her this, but she for her part could not understand my belief, which is that as you penetrate to the depths of the teaching which taught men to regard themselves as brothers in God, you will increase your sympathy. Nor could she understand my view, that all religions are worthy of respect, as stairways that lead from imperfection to the idea of perfection, to the idea of God, a view which is suggested by the words, "in my Father's house are many mansions".

It was a cold Christmas-time and this pious lady asked me to go with her to the church of the Madeleine on Christmas Day. This was a new experience for me, and it was the first time I had taken part in a service of this kind. As she stood before the images of divine beings and saints, I stood beside her,

kneeling when she knelt, and in every way showing my sincere respect and reverence.

"If there is any wish or desire in your own heart," she whispered to me, "ask, and perhaps it may be granted."

I looked towards the High Altar, and in my youthful and keen homesickness and in my feeling of exile and foreignness in that season "O King of all, Majesty Almighty," I said in my silent prayer, "You know how it is with us here. We are still in Your dominion and in Your garden, although strangers, and feeling almost homeless in these parts. All is known to You. It is not for me to ask. All is seen by You, Merciful, Almighty."

So were my thoughts. It is difficult to stand pure and submissive before God, an empty cup ready to receive whatever may be granted, and ready to accept in gratitude. But who can weigh the result of devout prayer? The answer and effect cannot be known or measured. It was not many weeks later that life began to brighten in my eyes. It was about this time too, that my brother came to know the great French musician, Debussy, who encouraged us by his real understanding and interest in our art, and by the new and sincere emotion that my brother's music inspired in him.

CHAPTER XIV

It is not within the aim of this small book to give a detailed account of our travels, or to explain Inayat Khan's philosophy with any fullness. But I may still mention a few of the chief ideas of that Sufi belief, which he sought to make more widely known.

He was fond of picturing this world and the surrounding space as a vault, a dome, in which every movement and thought has its echo. This echo returns as the answer to each word and deed. Religion is the recognition of this law, and the farther one proceeds into the inner and spiritual life, the more clearly one understands reward and punishment, success and failure, the echo and re-echo of cause and result. It is the desire of the mystic to fill this dome with sounds that are harmonious and pleasing and beneficent to man.

We believe that there is a law and order in the architecture of the Universe. We believe it is possible for man to gain an insight into the working of this law. And that every line of life, which gives scope to the intelligence, progresses towards this law and becomes in the end a spiritual life. The nature of this law is symbolically expressed in religion, but religious symbolisms may become fixed and lose their original meaning and vigour.

The history and evolution of the world has, according to the Sufi, covered a far vaster period of time than is generally estimated by modern thought. And in his perception, the Universe appears as having its limits, although these are beyond the grasp of human definition. He finds that the whole is subject to a law which works in every part; and that knowledge of a part leads to knowledge of the whole. "Verily not one atom is moved, without moving the whole Universe." (Unity of Religious Ideals.) As Jesus Christ has said, even the hairs of the head are numbered and a sparrow is of account.

But what is the mystical life? "Be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect," this is the divine precept. Mysticism is the progress towards this Perfection. There are two lines of progress. There is the perpendicular line, by which one may rise through purification, by knowledge of the self, into another life different from this life of the senses and matter, into a spiritual life. And there is the horizontal line of progress, by which, through gradually extending sympathy, one may learn to know and love one's neighbour as one's self, and so learn the divine love, which is unlimited. The ancient symbol of the Cross, the cross which every architect will tell you is the basis of every structure, is a symbol of the juncture of these two lines of progress towards connection with Divinity. Both lines of progress lead towards the same goal, since

spirit and matter are one, being manifestations of the central Reality.

Seventy thousand veils separate man on earth from God, the one Reality. These veils have given man forgetfulness, *nisyan*, and for this reason man is called *insan*. Man is in prison separated from God by these veils, and the whole purpose of Sufism and the mystics is to find a way of liberation from this prison, and to unite again with God, while still in this body. The body is not to be put off, it is to be made fine, a help and not a hindrance. The murshid, or teacher, in the Sufi teaching helps the disciple, making his way smooth through the different stages of this spiritual path, so that he may overcome the *nufs*, the false ego, which is the consciousness of the dark veils of separation, and may recognize his real self, and regain consciousness of God, and of his inheritance as a son of God.

A man feels safe upon the dry land, for there he can stand firm. But he fears the ocean for he may drown there, he may lose his life in the deep waters. Thus man fears mysticism. But the mystic risks life in this every-day world, to walk also in a world which is not a material world. He risks this worldly life to walk in a world which, in contrast, may be called a world of waters. He pictures himself as walking upon the waters, or as being as a fish at home in them. How marvellous that a little fish should know its way in the rivers and seas.

And the mystic describes his sustenance as not

only of this world, but as caught for him also in that other world. He has described it as a fish, that is caught by a holy virgin, which means, by sincerity and purity of motive, and purpose. Thus in all countries and ages, the fish has been used as a symbol of the mystical life, and of the mystic food which gives a foretaste of heaven.

The mystic is the free man. In this changing life on earth there is one thing real, says the Sufi: that is that part of one's self which receives the impression. Man too often puts himself in a spider's place, making his own web. He becomes so dependent and imprisoned in this web, that which of his thoughts are his own? But the mystic learns, through his travelling, to be conscious of his immortal soul, and thus he learns freedom, and enters with joy into the service of his life on earth and his divine inheritance. Everyone has at times a high feeling, a heroic feeling, a feeling of liberation, of happiness and gratitude unlimited. To live upon this note is the best prayer. This high feeling is the mystic's reward and his aim. This is his wine. This is his saki, pressed from the vine of life.

THE END